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Georgetown County Wins Smart Investing @ Your Library Grant to Promote Financial Education

Georgetown, S.C. – Georgetown County Library will launch a two-year, innovative, “Smart investing @ your library®” program, to promote financial education throughout its entire community. The public library will be working with a variety of civic groups countywide to help local citizens, including many disadvantaged ones, to learn to manage and invest money more effectively and wisely: very important topics during these tough economic times!

In January 2010, the American Library Association (ALA) and the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) Investor Education Foundation awarded \$87,300 to the Georgetown County Library – through the Friends of the Georgetown Library organization – as part of the national “Smart investing @ your library®” program. The Georgetown County Library is one of only 19 libraries nationwide to be selected for participation. It is also the only South Carolina library this year to receive this award.

The grant will help to build the capacity of the Georgetown County Library to provide effective, unbiased money-management and investor education to the community at large. With the funding, the Georgetown County Library will introduce “Powerful Investment Education” (P.I.E.) to enhance local folk’s basic financial literacy. “We want to make sure that every citizen in our district has a place at the table to enjoy a piece of the economic P.I.E.,” said Georgetown County Library Director Dwight McInvaill.

The Georgetown County Library’s *Powerful Investment Education* (P.I.E.) will encompass *P.I.E. Productions*, *P.I.E. Play*, and *P.I.E. Presentations*. The “Productions” component will involve establishing collections of books and materials on basic money management and investment in locations throughout the county, filming teen-generated public service announcements on financial education resources and opportunities, creating a digital collection of historic photographs on the Great Depression along with oral-history videos to remind the public how we’ve always faced such challenges, and adding FINRA investment education modules to the library’s website for more in-depth information.

P.I.E. Play will involve families in using digital means like Microsoft Photo Story 3 to share their remembrances of tough economic times while recalling how they persevered by working and striving together. Tots at childcare centers will be taught very basic money-related concepts in fun and age-appropriate ways. Older children will be encouraged to participate in tournaments involving educational interactive gaming on money management and financial topics. Folks of all ages will be invited to two community-wide parties to engage celebrate financial knowhow in ways that are informative but fun. “Picture for instance, a *Happy Days Are Here Again Fashion Show*,” said Georgetown County Library Director Dwight McInvaill, “with ‘Recessionistas’ or ‘Frugalistas’ – rather

than *Fashionistas* – strutting a ruthlessly pragmatic art of low-cost clothing: a fashion statement for our times with free food, too! Think lots of Kudzu Bakery cookies! Yes!”

P.I.E. Presentations will feature workshops and talks on financial management and investment topics. Activities will range from lectures by university professors to informational sessions for parents of endangered children. There will also be training for library staff in finding the very best money-making resources for local citizens when they visit the library for free, valuable information. “Such speakers will be submitted for approval to FINRA before being hired, since FINRA permits no one from the brokerage-firm-community to be involved with this project: the money for this grant comes from fines on this group, and it would be inappropriate to return the money to that sector,” said Library Director Dwight McInvaill.

“We are so pleased to have been selected by the ALA and FINRA Investor Education Foundation for participation in this important investor education program,” said Georgetown County Library Director Dwight McInvaill. “Through the grant, we are able to offer a number of new high-quality investor educations and services, enabling our library to become an even stronger resource for patrons looking to learn more about investment options and saving strategies.”

“Smart decisions about personal finances and investing often begin at the local public library,” said John Gannon, president of the FINRA Foundation. “By nearly doubling last year’s funding for Smart investing @ your library®, we are helping to turn library cards into passports for people hoping to arrive at a brighter financial future. Our Foundation is proud to partner with the ALA and to support the important investor education efforts at the Georgetown County Library.”

“The Georgetown County Library has always been a valuable source of information for its citizens, and libraries are part of the solution when a community is struggling economically,” said ALA President Camila Alire. “From free access to books and online resources for families to library business centers that help support entrepreneurship and retraining, libraries enable lifelong learning. I would like to thank the FINRA Foundation for its continued investment in our nation’s libraries. We are thrilled that through the FINRA Foundation’s generous support, Smart investing @ your library® grantees will have the resources to provide library users with access to unbiased investor education.”

Smart investing @ your library® is being administered jointly by the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA), a division of the ALA, and the FINRA Investor Education Foundation (formerly known as the NASD Investor Education Foundation). The program supports public libraries in their efforts to meet investor education and protection needs at the community level.

Established in 1876, the ALA is the oldest and largest library association in the world. Its mission is “to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.” For more information, visit www.ala.org.

The FINRA Investor Education Foundation supports innovative research and educational projects that give underserved Americans the knowledge, skills and tools necessary for financial success throughout life. For details about grant programs and other FINRA Foundation initiatives, visit www.finrafoundation.org.

FINRA, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, is the largest non-governmental regulator for all securities firms doing business in the United States. FINRA is dedicated to investor protection and market integrity through effective and efficient regulation. FINRA registers and educates industry participants, examines securities firms; writes and enforces rules and federal securities laws, educates the investing public and provides trade reporting and other industry utilities. FINRA also administers the largest dispute resolution forum for investors and registered firms. For more information, please visit our Web site at www.finra.org.

The Reference and User Services Association, a division of the American Library Association, is the foremost organization of reference and information professionals who make the connections between people and the information sources, services and collection materials they need. Established in 1876, the American Library Association is the oldest and largest library association in the world. It strives to provide leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all. For more information, visit www.ala.org.

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About the S.C. State Library

The South Carolina State Library is the primary administrator of federal and state support for the state's libraries. The Library is a national model for innovation, collaboration, leadership and effectiveness. The Library's mission is to optimize South Carolina's investment in library and information services. In 1969, as the result of action by the General Assembly, the State Library Board was redesignated as the South Carolina State Library and assumed responsibility for public library development, library service for state institutions, service for the blind and physically handicapped, and library service to state government agencies. Headquartered in Columbia, S.C., the Library is funded by the state of South Carolina, by the federal government through the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and other sources. For more information, visit www.statelibrary.sc.gov or call 803-734-8666.