

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**State of Tennessee and Sonic Announce Partnership to Provide Free  
Vanilla Cone to Tennessee's Graduating Kindergarteners**

*Unique Partnership Rewards Students and Encourages Families to Save Early for College Education*

NASHVILLE, Tenn.— When many people think of May graduation season, college graduation ceremonies come to mind. And with the cost of college steadily increasing, it's important for families to start planning ahead if they want their children to reach that milestone. That's why the State of Tennessee, the **Path2College 529 Plan** (offered by the State of Georgia) and Sonic Drive-Ins® came together today at **Westmeade Elementary School** to announce a special partnership intended not only to honor graduating kindergarteners, but also to encourage parents to think about their children's future educational needs now, when they are young.

The **Path2College 529 Plan** is a Georgia state-sponsored program promoted by the State of Tennessee for Tennessee residents to provide families with a tax-advantaged method for saving money for college expenses. Under the partnership with Sonic Drive-Ins, parents with kindergarteners graduating in May or June 2009 have an opportunity to print a *Buy-One-Get-One-Free* vanilla cone coupon, which can be used at participating Sonic Drive-Ins around the state. The coupon is available at [www.path2college529.com](http://www.path2college529.com), and is intended to reward children for their first major educational accomplishment.

To kick off the promotion, Tennessee Treasurer David H. Lillard, Jr., **Sonic** and the **Path2College 529 Plan** brought Sonic treats for kindergarteners at **Westmeade Elementary School**, where Lillard read "Oh Places You Will Go," by Dr. Seuss for the students before making a formal announcement about the partnership. He also planted a Tulip Poplar tree to commemorate the students and their future.

"If they haven't already, the time for families to begin to think about their children's future education and saving for college is when they graduate kindergarten," said Lillard. "While saving for college may seem overwhelming, it is a cost that families can't afford to ignore until later. Just like the tree we planted today will grow a little each year until it is a mature part of the landscape, a college savings plan started today can grow over time to help provide for these children's future."

Lillard said the offer with Sonic is Tennessee's way of congratulating kids on this milestone achievement and encouraging parents to consider opening a college savings plan or increasing their contribution if they already have one.

"Sonic is proud to partner with Path2College to focus attention on the importance of saving for higher education," notes Dominic Losacco, vice president of customer engagement for Sonic. "Partnering with organizations that benefit families and further education is Sonic's way of saying thank you to our loyal

customers and employees in the communities we serve.” With more than 3,500 locations nationwide, Sonic’s smiling Carhops serve up a delicious menu of meal and drink options, made-to-order.

**About Path2College:**

In an effort to help Tennessee families save for college, the State of Tennessee partnered with the State of Georgia last year to promote the *Path2College 529 Plan* to provide a competitive and proven way for Tennessee parents and grandparents to save for college. Much like 401(k) plans provide people with a tax-advantaged way to save money for retirement, 529 plans helps families prepare for the future costs of college tuition and other qualified expenses, such as certain room and board expenses, books and fees, and computers for colleges in Tennessee and nationwide. The *Path2College 529 Plan* is easy to understand and use, with no sign-up, maintenance or third-party sales fees – just a low annual asset-based management fee, and an account can be opened online with as little as \$25.

Any earnings in the *Path2College 529 Plan* are federal income tax-deferred and withdrawals for tuition, certain room and board expenses, books, fees, computers and other qualified college expenses are tax free. Your account assets can be used at virtually any college or university in the country. The plan offers seven investment options, low annual asset-based fees, and participants can arrange for automatic contributions to their accounts to be drawn directly from a bank account or made through payroll deduction.

The *Path2College 529 Plan* is managed by TIAA-CREF Tuition Financing, Inc., which is part of the TIAA-CREF group of companies. The *Path2College 529 Plan* already has over \$500 million in assets and over 100,000 accounts.

For more information on the *Path2College 529 Plan*, visit: [www.path2college529.com](http://www.path2college529.com) or call (877) 424-4377.

**Consider the investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses before investing in the Path2College 529 Plan. Please visit [www.path2college529.com](http://www.path2college529.com) for a Disclosure Booklet containing this and other information. Read it carefully.**

**Before investing in a 529 plan, you should consider whether the state you or your Beneficiary reside in or have taxable income in has a 529 plan that offers favorable state income tax or other benefits that are only available if you invest in that state’s 529 plan.**

Account value for the Investment Options is not guaranteed and will fluctuate based upon a number of factors, including general market conditions.

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