**First Lady Casey DeSantis Announces 2019 Black History Month Theme and Student Contests**Student essay contest winners will receive a 4-Year Florida College Plan scholarship provided by the Florida Prepaid College Foundation

**Tallahassee, Fla.** – Today, First Lady Casey DeSantis announced the theme and student contests for 2019 Black History Month. This year’s theme will be “Celebrating Public Service” to recognize and pay tribute to African-American leaders who play prominent roles in public service throughout Florida.

“Ron and I could not be more excited to join our state’s incredible students, parents, teachers and educators during Black History Month to celebrate and champion the public service of so many influential Floridians,” said **First Lady Casey DeSantis.**“Our state is blessed to have several inspirational and talented leaders who serve our communities every day. I look forward to highlighting the contributions of those individuals during Black History Month.” First Lady DeSantis invited students to participate in academic and creative contests based on this year’s theme. Students in grades K-3 are invited to participate in an art contest while students in grades 4-12 are invited to participate in an essay contest. Additionally, students, parents, teachers and principals are invited to nominate full-time educators of all student grades for the Black History Month Excellence in Education Award.

**About the Student Art Contest**
First Lady Casey DeSantis’ Black History Month Art Contest is open to all K-3 students in Florida. Each student will submit original, two-dimensional artwork based on this year’s theme. Two winners will be selected.

**About the Student Essay Contest**
First Lady Casey DeSantis’ Black History Month Essay Contest is open to all 4-12 students in Florida. Each student will submit one essay no longer than 500 words based on this year’s theme. Three winners will be selected: one elementary school student (grades 4-5), one middle school student (grades 6-8) and one high school student (grades 9-12). Each winner will receive a 4-Year Florida College Plan scholarship provided by the Florida Prepaid College Foundation.

**About the Excellence in Education Award**
First Lady Casey DeSantis’ Black History Month Excellence in Education Award Contest is open to all full-time educators in an elementary, middle, or high school in Florida. Three winners will be selected: one elementary school teacher (grades K-5), one middle school teacher (grades 6-8) and one high school teacher (grades 9-12). Nominations may be submitted by a principal, teacher, parent/guardian or student.

**Contest Entries and Nominating Forms and Guidelines**
Student contest forms and educator nomination forms must be mailed to Volunteer Florida or submitted online at [www.FloridaBlackHistory.com (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](http://www.floridablackhistory.com/)

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