



OFFICE OF ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

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Illinois Treasurer Michael Frerichs Partners with Discovery Center Museum to Host \$5.29 Admission Day on April 5 and Promote Bright Start 529 College Savings Program

*Rockford-area families can decorate piggy banks as part of the Bright Start 529
Little Savers Crafting Workshop*

ROCKFORD – Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs and the Discovery Center Museum in Rockford are teaming up for a reduced-price admission day on Saturday, April 5, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The event is sponsored by Bright Start 529, an Illinois 529 college savings plan.

General admission at the children’s museum, located at 711 N. Main St., will be \$5.29 that day. In addition, the first 400 children admitted can decorate their own piggy banks to take home at the “Little Savers Crafting Workshop.” Families also are invited to speak directly with members of the Bright Start 529 team to learn more about how a 529 account can help achieve college savings goals.

The event underscores the shared commitment of Discovery Center Museum and Treasurer Frerichs to bring Illinois children more opportunities of learning and discovery.

“Here at Discovery Center Museum, our long-standing mission is to inspire all children to dream, explore, and create without limits,” said Meredith McKay, director of advancement at Discovery Center Children’s Museum. “This collaboration with Bright Start 529 aligns with that and is a great example of how families who walk through our doors can have a meaningful experience that benefits them both today and tomorrow.”

Bright Start 529 is an Illinois college savings plan administered by the Frerichs’s office. Since 2015, Frerichs has significantly grown the Bright Start 529 program, which includes the creation of the Illinois First Steps program that offers a one-time \$50 seed deposit to eligible children born or adopted on or after January 1, 2023 to an Illinois resident parent.

“The best time to start saving for college is yesterday. The second-best time to start saving is today,” Treasurer Frerichs said. “If a child knows they have a college savings plan, they are three times more likely to attend college. We hope parents will walk away from this event learning about the importance of saving at an early age. By saving with a Bright Start 529 plan, families can prepare for the cost of higher education.”

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The Discovery Center Museum event is part of an ongoing effort by the State Treasurer's Office to collaborate with select Illinois children's museums to organize free and reduced-price admission days and spread the word about college savings plans.

A 529 plan is a tax-advantaged investment account that can be used to save for higher education, including universities (public/private), community and technical colleges, and graduate and professional schools nationwide and many abroad. Recognizing the increasing costs for post-secondary education, Frerichs has worked to reduce plan fees savings families more than \$100 million, which ensures more investment dollars go directly to college savings. More information, including how to open an account, can be found at BrightStart.com.

About the Illinois Treasurer

The Illinois State Treasurer's Office is a powerful economic engine that invests in people to drive prosperity, development and growth throughout the state. As State Treasurer, Michael Frerichs (FRAIR'iks) is the state's Chief Investment and Banking Officer and actively manages approximately \$60 billion. The investments help families pay for college and trade school; workers save for a dignified retirement; and local governments process bill payments more efficiently so they can pass along the savings to taxpayers. The office provides financial institutions money to loan to farmers, small business owners, and qualified individuals at below-market rates because better jobs create stronger communities. The office operates the state's largest consumer protection initiative, the unclaimed property I-Cash program, which has returned a record-breaking \$2.2 billion since Frerichs was elected.

For more news about the State Treasurer's Office, please follow Treasurer Frerichs on Instagram at [ILTreasurer](#), [LinkedIn](#) and Facebook at [Invested in You – Treasurer Michael Frerichs](#). You can find the weekly newsletter [here](#).

About the Bright Start 529 College Savings Plan

Illinois' highly rated Bright Start Direct-Sold College Savings Program ("Bright Start 529") has been making it easier for families to save for higher education expenses since 2000. Open a Bright Start 529 account and funds saved can be used at universities, community and technical colleges, and graduate or professional schools nationwide and many abroad. In addition to tuition and fees, funds may be used for certain housing and food (room and board) expenses, computer/tablets, books, supplies or other qualified expenses. Bright Start 529 is sponsored by the State of Illinois and administered by the Illinois State Treasurer, as Trustee. For more information about Bright Start 529, including investment objectives, risks, expenses, and other important information, please visit our website at www.brightstart.com.

About Discovery Center Museum

Discovery Center Museum is a children's museum in Rockford, IL, offering engaging hands-on experiences in math, science, and art. With over 250 interactive exhibits and outdoor park, the museum provides a dynamic learning environment for families. Located inside Riverfront Museum Park at 711 North Main Street, Rockford, IL. For more information about Discovery Center Museum, visit www.discoverycentermuseum.org or call (815) 963-6769.

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