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Kids, Families Invited to ‘Reading with a Ranger’ Every Weekend in June at Gateway Arch
Hosted by Gateway Arch National Park and Gateway Arch Park Foundation, this new children’s literacy program will explore themes related to self-discovery, belonging and community.

ST. LOUIS (May 26, 2022) – Gateway Arch National Park in partnership with Gateway Arch Park Foundation and Great Southern Bank’s Community Matters Program are thrilled to announce a new literacy program: Reading with a Ranger.

Reading with a Ranger invites children and families to visit Gateway Arch National Park in June to receive a copy of a meaningful, themed children’s book, read it together with a park ranger, engage in a group discussion, and then do an activity connecting the book with the park’s themes.

The one-hour program will be offered every Saturday (10 a.m.) and Sunday (1 p.m.) during the month of June. A parent or guardian must accompany each child. It is designed to be sequential but also allows for one-off attendance, with each weekend encompassing a different theme:

- Week 1, June 4-5: Marvelous Me
- Week 2, June 11-12: Belonging
- Week 3, June 18-19: Neighborhoods
- Week 4, June 25-26: America

The program curriculum was developed in partnership with We Stories, a St. Louis nonprofit that uses the power of children’s literature to inspire conversation and change, helping families strengthen or begin discussions about race and racism and pursue action to create more inclusive communities.

“We’re excited to launch Reading with a Ranger with our partners at the National Park Service,” said Ryan McClure, executive director of Gateway Arch Park Foundation. “Part of our mission is

to support educational opportunities at our hometown national park, and this program is a fun way to bring the community together and explore topics important to today's families in St. Louis. We're grateful to Great Southern Bank for their support in piloting this program."

"Great Southern Bank believes community matters and strives to support the work of nonprofit organizations where we are," said Brian Davies, St. Louis Market President of Great Southern Bank. "We are proud to support this literacy program in our home state."

Reading with a Ranger

Children and families are invited to explore their unique selves, their neighborhoods and their country through children's literature and a group discussion led each weekend by a park ranger at Gateway Arch National Park.

WHEN:

- 10 a.m., Saturdays, June 4, 11, 18, 25
- 1 p.m., Sundays, June 5, 12, 19, 26

WHERE: Education Room, Museum at the Gateway Arch

COST: Free to attend, but registration is required. One book copy per family registered. A parent or guardian must accompany their child. Registration will be limited to the first 20 children registered for each session.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: archpark.org/reading

About Gateway Arch Park Foundation

Gateway Arch Park Foundation is the official philanthropic partner and conservancy for Gateway Arch National Park. Its mission is to ensure the Gateway Arch, its grounds, neighboring public spaces, and attractions are a vital, welcoming, well-supported resource to the community and nation for generations to come. The Foundation is part of an alliance that helps meet this mission, which includes the National Park Service, Bi-State Development, Great Rivers Greenway, Jefferson National Parks Association, and the City of St. Louis. For more information, visit ArchPark.org.

About Gateway Arch National Park

Gateway Arch National Park is a unit of the National Park System that commemorates Thomas Jefferson's vision of a unified continental nation and St. Louis' role as the gateway to the American West during the 19th century and preserves the Old Courthouse as the site of the Dred Scott case. The park includes the Gateway Arch, the Arch grounds and the Old Courthouse, located on the riverfront in downtown St. Louis. It is open daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The Old Courthouse is currently closed. The park is closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Most programs are FREE of charge and open to the public. Many programs and events at the park benefit from the generous support from park partners Gateway Arch Park Foundation, Jefferson National Parks Association, and Bi-State Development. For more information about Gateway Arch National Park, visit nps.gov/jeff.

About Great Southern Bank's Community Matters Program

The Great Southern Bank Community Matters program focuses on understanding and responding to local needs through charitable donations, financial education, community development lending and investing, and volunteerism.

About Great Southern Bank

Great Southern Bank operates more than 100 offices across 12 states – Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas. With a mission to build winning relationships with its customers, associates, shareholders and communities, Great Southern is headquartered in Springfield, MO, and has \$5.3 billion in total assets. The Bank is a subsidiary of Great Southern Bancorp, Inc., a public company listed on the Nasdaq Global Select stock exchange (ticker: GSBC).