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**ILLINOIS BUREAU OF TOURISM AND FIRST LADY LURA LYNN
RYAN PROUDLY ANNOUNCE SPONSORSHIP OF
READ TO SUCCEED LITERACY PROGRAM**
136 additional schools now able to participate in program

(Chicago, IL) February 10, 2000 – Illinois First Lady Lura Lynn Ryan announced today that the state of Illinois and Six Flags are sponsoring the Six Flags Read to Succeed program as part of Illinois' Millennium program. Mrs. Ryan was joined by Chicago Public Schools Chief Executive Officer Paul Vallas at a press conference at Penn Elementary School in Chicago.

Illinois' sponsorship of the Six Flags Read to Succeed program will enable students at Penn Elementary School (1616 S. Avers Avenue) and 136 additional schools in Illinois and four surrounding states to take part in this successful reading program.

“My hope is that this program fosters a love of reading in these young people,” said Mrs. Ryan. “Through these selected readings they will gain a greater understanding of the rich heritage Illinois has to offer.”

For the first time since the Read to Succeed program was implemented in 1988, Six Flags is allowing Illinois as a sponsor to customize a special teaching guide. The guide will be distributed to teachers in more than 3,200 Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Michigan elementary schools (Grades K-6). The customized curriculum includes activities on Illinois history and heritage, famous landmarks in the state, historical events and activities tracing the life and career of one of Illinois' most famous residents, Abraham Lincoln. It also includes a suggested reading list of children's books on Illinois history and on Abraham Lincoln.

Six Flags has implemented the Read to Succeed Program in thousands of schools nationwide. Over five million students have participated since the start of the program, and have completed nearly three billion minutes of outside the classroom reading. Participation in the “Read to Succeed—600 Minute Reading Club” challenges students to read for pleasure with the offer of a fun reward—free admission to their local Six Flags Theme Park.

The customized curriculum was designed by Knowledge Unlimited with input from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, Bureau of Tourism.

For information on this and all of the Illinois Millennium programs visit the Illinois Millennium Web site at www.enjoyillinois.com/2000.

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The Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA), Bureau of Tourism works to enhance the economic development climate for the citizens of Illinois.