



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Masons donate large George Washington portraits to all Beaufort County schools

BEAUFORT – Every school in the Beaufort County School District will soon be receiving a large portrait of America’s first president, courtesy of the South Carolina Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons.

Representatives of the Grand Lodge – assisted by Masons from Unanimity Lodge 418, Harmony Lodge 22 and Hardeeville Lodge 348 – presented the first of the George Washington portraits to students and staff at Beaufort Middle School.

“It’s going to be a wonderful addition to our school media center,” said Principal Carole Ingram. “Our students study the Revolutionary War in their social studies classes, and this helps bring to life an important figure in the birth of our nation.”

The three-foot by four-foot framed portraits were provided as part of a fund-raising campaign by Beaufort County Masonic Lodges. For a \$150 donation to fund juvenile diabetes research, a donor’s name was etched on a plaque affixed to the frame.

The local juvenile diabetes fund-raiser is a part of a larger effort by The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina to put portraits in every school across the state.

“It’s terrific for everyone,” said Sam Turner. “The students get to see this historic portrait of the nation’s first president, juvenile diabetes research gets additional funding and our Masons continue to stay involved in their communities.”

More than 500 portraits have been donated to South Carolina schools, Turner said, and more than \$40,000 has been raised statewide for juvenile diabetes research.

The donated artwork, painted in 1796 by Gilbert Stuart, is known as the “Lansdowne Portrait” because it was a gift to the Marquis of Lansdowne, an English supporter of American independence, from Senator and Mrs. William Bingham of Pennsylvania. An original is still

hanging in the White House today; it was saved by First Lady Dolly Madison during the burning of the White House by the British during the War of 1812.

Beaufort County Board of Education member Joseph Dunkle, who represents the district where Beaufort Middle School is located, thanked the Masons on behalf of other district schools that would be receiving their own portraits.

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