



**GEORGIA PARTNERSHIP**  
**FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION**

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For Immediate Release

**EDUCATION POLICY FELLOWSHIP CLASS HONORED;**  
**SEVENTH COHORT ADDS TO STATE'S EXPERTISE**

GLISI's Robert Gaines Among the 20 Grads

**ATLANTA** -- Robert Gaines, the communications and development manager for the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement, was one of 20 participants in the seventh class of the Education Policy Fellowship Program who graduated May 21 during ceremonies conducted at the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce headquarters here.

EPFP is conducted by the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education and is billed as a “professional development program that provides potential leaders with the knowledge and networks to advance the core issues of education policy... ultimately EPFP seeks to improve the chances of children and youth to succeed.” Georgia is one of 12 states and the District of Columbia to offer the unique program that is sponsored here by Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company and Wells Fargo.

Gaines found the 9-month program to be professionally rewarding. “The value of the program for me is its charge to find a niche in the education policy landscape and make a positive contribution,” he explained. “The program demystified for me what it takes to be a change agent in education and equipped me with the knowledge and the network to be a person of influence in my community and across the state.”

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## EPFP GRADUATION 2-2-2

According to the Georgia Partnership's president Dr. Steve Dolinger, the organization has long recognized the need to develop leaders across the state who have a clear understanding of how education policy is made and carried out. Collaboration was begun in 2008 with the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington DC, which oversees the national operation, to bring the program to Georgia. Dolinger explained the program has consistently grown to where it is now recognized as one of the best state EPFP programs in the nation.

Gaines added to Dolinger's comments about the value of the program to Georgia. "The value is its development and deployment of cohorts of knowledgeable and passionate individuals who are prepared to lead with purpose and affect real change in their communities and schools," he explained.

Gaines said he enthusiastically recommends EPFP. "I would definitely recommend EPFP to someone with an interest in education policy," he said. "The program's content is accessible enough for those with a budding interest in education policy, while being robust enough to stretch the thinking of a seasoned policy expert."

The program is composed of monthly colloquiums and attendance at a national leadership conference in Washington D.C. Speakers include leaders in a wide variety of subjects including funding, global and higher education, school choice, early education, politics, the demographic landscape and more.

The Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education is accepting applications for the eighth class which will begin in August. Details are available at <http://www.gpee.org/Education-Policy-Fellowship-Program.42.0.html>.

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Founded in 1992 by the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and the Georgia Economic Developers Association, the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education consists of business, education, community and government leaders who share a vision of improved education. Working to be Georgia's foremost change agent in education, the non-partisan, non-profit, independent organization takes lead roles in efforts to shape policy and reform education. More information is available at [www.gpee.org](http://www.gpee.org).

PHOTO Caption:

The Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement's Robert Gaines poses after accepting his Education Policy Fellowship Program graduation certificate from Dr. Steve Dolinger (right), president of the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, and Shan Cooper, VP and General Manager, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co., and the former Georgia Partnership Board Chair, who provided the graduation address.