



PRESSALERT

For Immediate Release

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From Bricks to Bridges: Georgia Department of Transportation teams up with LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Atlanta for educational I-85 community project

Atlanta's leading family attraction to host large-scale LEGO® bridge build and themed activities to teach families about infrastructure

ATLANTA— Georgia Department of Transportation (Georgia DOT) is teaming up with the **LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Atlanta** to help inspire the minds of young engineers-to-be and shed a positive, creative light on the high-profile reconstruction of I-85. Georgia DOT's Chief Engineer, Meg Pirkle, along with LEGOLAND Discovery Center Atlanta's Master Model Builder, Rod Farris will lead daily educational, building-themed classes in the Model Builder Academy for families to learn more about building techniques and how roads and bridges are critically important pieces of our infrastructure. Visitors will also be invited to contribute in real-time to a large-scale community build of the bridge, due to stand three feet tall, extend four feet long and feature 20,000 LEGO bricks!

The program will culminate in the unveiling of the final creation – built brick-by-brick by the children of Atlanta – to coincide with the reopening of the I-85 bridge, currently expected to happen prior to Memorial Day weekend.

"The entire community is very interested in and focused on the I-85 bridge reconstruction," said Scott Higley, director of strategic communications for the Georgia Department of Transportation "LEGO bricks are an interactive resource that captivate the attention of children and adults alike, and our hope is that by partnering with LEGOLAND Discovery Center Atlanta, we'll be able to teach families about this building process in a way that's fun and easy to understand."

As part of the “From Bricks to Bridges” program, LEGOLAND Discovery Center Atlanta is hosting daily “Bridge & Test” workshops in the Model Builder Academy from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Young builders in training will be challenged to create mini-bridge models, test their work with weighted LEGO cars and rebuild their designs as necessary. Following the build challenge, Master Model Builder Rod Farris (a.k.a. Professor Rod) will lead a discussion on which building techniques were most successful. Classes last around 30 minutes and are free with the price of admission.

For the duration of the I-85 reconstruction project, guests can contribute to the large-scale LEGO bridge outside of the Model Builder Academy – brick by brick!

“We’re always looking for fun and innovative ways to teach kids how to apply building with LEGO brick to real life careers, so this collaborative partnership with GDOT was a natural fit!” said Whitney Kemmerick, marketing manager at LEGOLAND Discovery Center Atlanta. “Children are naturally inquisitive and have become fascinated with the bridge reconstruction, so we’re taking this opportunity to educate visiting families about building processes and fundamentals in a fun way. We cannot wait to see the results of our community-built LEGO bridge!”

For more information, please visit dot.ga.gov or legolanddiscoverycenter.com/atlanta. Comprehensive information regarding the I-85 rebuild can be found at www.i85rebuild.org. Photos below may be used for broadcasting.

About Georgia Department of Transportation

The Georgia Department of Transportation is committed to providing a safe, seamless and sustainable transportation system that supports Georgia’s economy and is sensitive to both its citizens and its environment. For more information on Georgia DOT, please visit www.dot.ga.gov. You also may follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT) and Twitter (<http://twitter.com/GDOTEastTraffic>).

About Merlin Entertainments

MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS plc is the leading name in location-based, family entertainment. Europe’s Number 1 and the world’s second-largest visitor attraction operator, Merlin now operates 111 attractions, 12 hotels/4 holiday villages in 23 countries and across 4 continents. The company aims to deliver memorable and rewarding experiences to its almost 63 million visitors worldwide, through its iconic global and local brands, and the commitment and passion of its managers and estimated 26,000 employees (peak season). Among Merlin’s attractions are - SEA LIFE, Madame Tussauds, LEGOLAND, DreamWorks Tours SHREK’s Adventure, The London Eye, Dungeons, Gardaland, LEGOLAND Discovery Centres, Alton Towers Resort, Warwick Castle, THORPE PARK Resort, Blackpool Tower, Heide Park Resort, Sydney Tower Eye and SKYWALK. All brands which are distinctive, challenging and innovative – and which have great potential for growth in the future. Visit www.merlinentertainments.biz for more information.

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If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to send an email to [Jill Goldberg](mailto:Jill.Goldberg@dot.ga.gov).

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