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IDEal – Idaho’s 529 College Savings Program Announces Winners of “Draw Your Dream” Sweepstakes



BOISE – Thirteen-year-old Ava Kerr clearly has the moon and stars in mind when she thinks about her future career. Her 11-year-old brother Gavin, however, imagines a more grounded future, one focused on the outdoors and the study of bears or other wild creatures.

During the month of April, the sister and brother from Meridian joined dozens of children from across the state in a “Draw Your Dream” sweepstakes sponsored by IDEal, Idaho’s state-sponsored 529 College Savings Program.

The challenge posed to young dreamers and artists? Using crayons, watercolors, colored pencils or magic markers, put on paper what they hope the future holds in store for their dream job or profession. Each week in April, IDEal drew one winner of a \$50 contribution toward a 529 college savings account. At the end, a Grand Prize winner received a \$100 contribution.

Ava Kerr’s piece, entitled “Astronaut,” features a mix of stars and planets set against the dark backdrop of outer space. The centerpiece of Gavin’s drawing, in blacks and shades of gray, is a burly bear marching along a Sawtooth-like mountain range, a dreamy setting for anyone who shares his interest in a career with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.



Their mother, Julia Kerr, said the inspiration for Ava and Gavin's entries stems from traveling and thinking about future career interests. A trip five years ago to the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, still drives Ava's career planning, while Gavin's love for hiking, hunting and fishing are clearly driving his grown-up goals, she said.

Christine Stoll, Executive Director of IDeal, said the idea for the "Draw Your Dream" contest developed as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal, she said, was to give children and parents a meaningful activity to help keep a positive focus on the future and higher education plans.

"Encouraging students and families to dream big for their futures is a leading value for our IDeal 529 program," Stoll said. "As we thought about ways to keep Idaho parents and families engaged during the last two months, we had several families who indicated the art project would be a welcome distraction and a mechanism for parents to continue the discussion with children about future goals, dreams and plans for achieving them."

Stoll also said the contest was inspiring because it provided a glimpse into the imaginations and creativity of Idaho's young people.

For example, take 13-year-old Jackson who imagines becoming an animator and depicts his dream with an impressive cartoon-style drawing of a young man sitting at a computer desk. For 8-year-old Penelope, a drawing of a smiling woman standing beside a blackboard with arithmetic tables speaks to her plans to teach. Then there is the dual vision of Dylan, who at age 11, drew a football player adjacent to a donut store to show his intentions to play in the NFL and one day bake and sell donuts.

Drawings by the Kerrs and other contestants can be viewed online at <https://www.idsaves.org/home/drawyourdreamsweepstakes.html>

Like so many families across the state, Julia Kerr and her husband Todd opened 529 accounts shortly after Ava and Gavin were born. The couple contributes to the account regularly and appreciate the tax savings that come with the program.

Idahoans who contribute to an IDeal account qualify for a state tax deduction of up to \$6,000, or \$12,000 if married and filing jointly. In addition, unlike most traditional investments, an IDeal account can grow state and federal tax-deferred.

Recent federal rule changes now allow for the earnings portion of a distribution from a 529 account to be used, without being subject to federal income tax, for apprenticeship programs as well. This includes fees, books, supplies and equipment required of a program certified by the U.S. Department of Labor.

"I'd just encourage people to utilize (529s) up to any amount they can because the tax savings is such a good benefit," said Julia Kerr.

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About iDeal — Idaho College Savings Program

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- State Treasurer Julie Ellsworth, Board Chair
- Governor Brad Little (Greg Wilson, designee)
- State Controller Brandon Woolf (Patrick Hodges, designee)
- Attorney General Lawrence Wasden (Brian Kane, designee)
- Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra (Tim Hill, designee)
- Secretary of State Lawrence Denney (Chad Houck, designee)

For more information about iDeal, contact Christine Stoll at 208-332-2935 or cstoll@idsaves.idaho.gov or visit www.idsaves.org to obtain a Disclosure Statement. The Disclosure Statement discusses investment objectives, risks, charges, expenses, and other important information. Because investing in iDeal is an important decision for you and your family, you should read and consider the Disclosure Statement carefully before investing.

Before you invest, consider whether you're or the beneficiary's home state offers any state tax or other state benefits such as financial aid, scholarship funds and protection from creditors that are only available for investments in the that state's qualified tuition program.

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