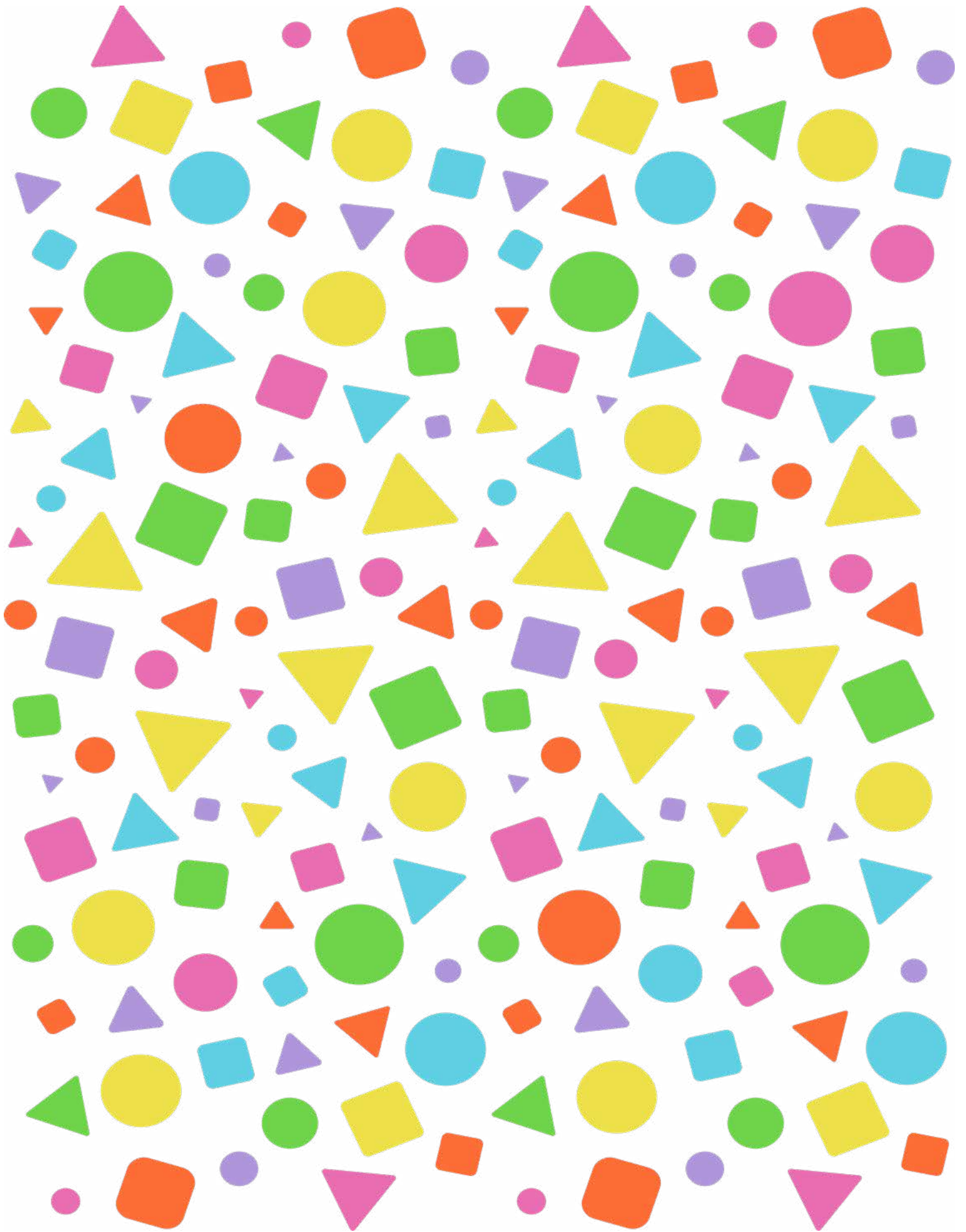


G I S F O R

*Geaux
Far*
LOUISIANA

A - Z C O L O R I N G B O O K



Dear Champion for Children,

Louisiana's youngest children and their families should be thriving, not just surviving. Yet, too many families with children, prenatal to age five, struggle to access the information, resources, networks, programs, and services they need during the earliest years of their child's life. In Louisiana, our systems are disjointed, under-resourced, and not sufficiently responsive to families.

Simply put, we have to do better. Our children are far too valuable not to. **We believe we can create an equitable, unified, child- and family-centered early childhood system that centers racial equity and ensures families have access to seamless, high-quality early childhood development, health, and educational services.**

That is why we created Geaux Far Louisiana—to dream big for our littlest and most vulnerable ones—particularly our children from prenatal to age three. As the old African proverb says, “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” The Geaux Far Louisiana planning process engaged thousands of families, service providers, community leaders, and advocates for young children and their families from across the state. We are honored to present the enclosed plan, which represents the dreams of Louisiana’s families for our young children and articulates a path to achieving this vision that unites our coalition.

Now the real work begins to make this vision a reality in Louisiana. We need your help. Implementing this plan will require an unprecedented level of investment and effort across communities and the public and private sectors. It takes nothing short of a paradigm shift. Geaux Far Louisiana requires all of us to recognize that providing for the health, well-being, and education of our young children and their families is a public good, and a valuable and worthwhile investment. We encourage you to get involved in making this dream a reality at www.geauxfarla.org. Together, we can Geaux Far for Louisiana’s children!

Sincerely,



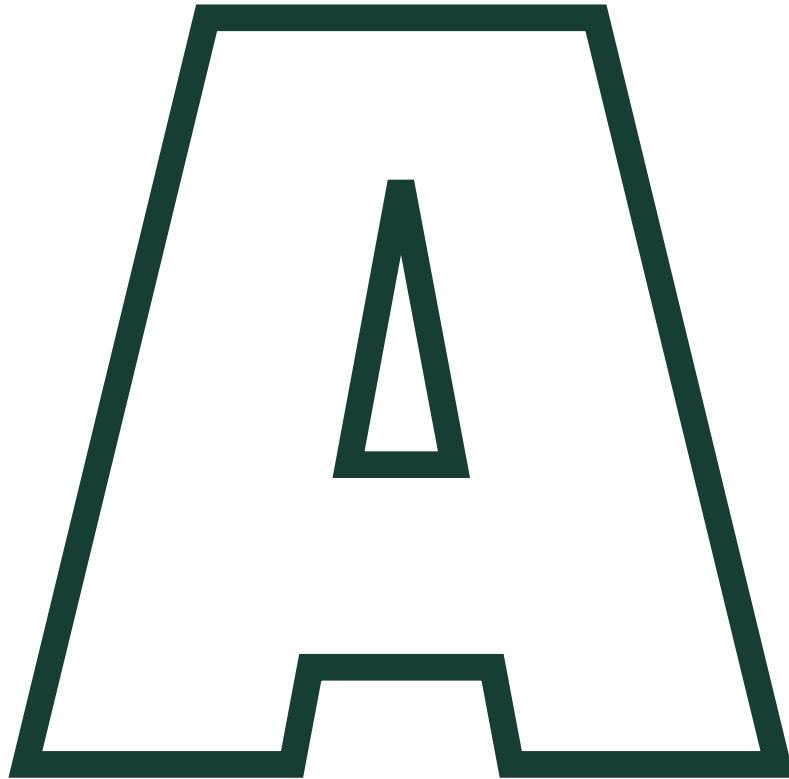
Libbie Sonnier, Ph.D.

Executive Director of the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children
Geaux Far Louisiana Steering Committee Co-Chair



Rochelle Wilcox

Executive Director of Wilcox Academy of Early Learning
Co-Founder of For Providers By Providers
Geaux Far Louisiana Steering Committee Co-Chair
Louisiana 2022 Early Learning Leader of the Year



is for Alligator

Alligators are large reptiles that can be found in Louisiana and other southern states. The alligator is even the official state reptile of Louisiana!

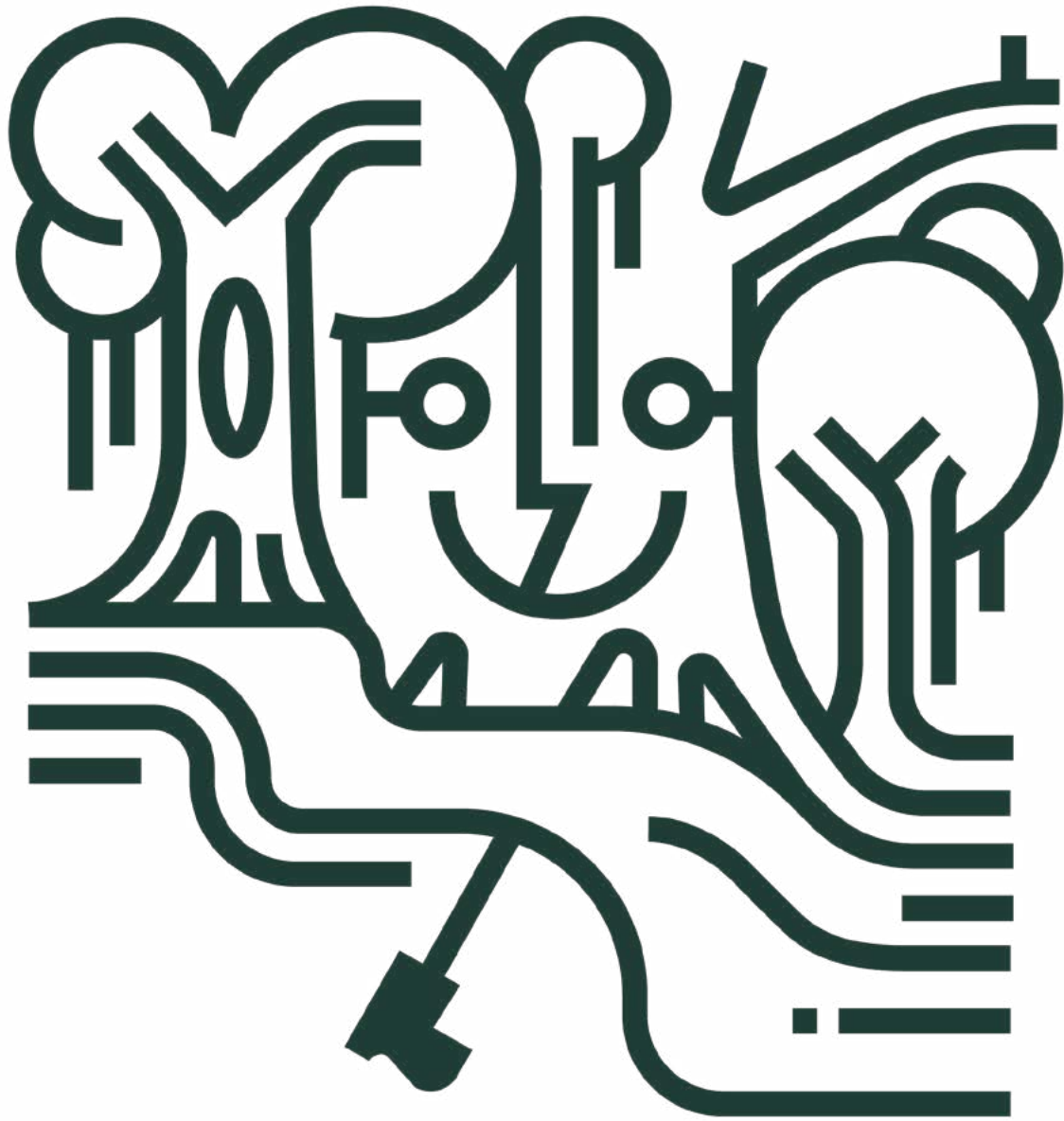


Armand, the jolly Alligator, is always the first in the Geaux Far parade to dance, inspiring others to join in and wag their tails along with him. Armand knows that when everyone in the parade feels comfortable to be themselves, they can all Geaux Far for Louisiana's children!



is for Bayou

The bayou is a body of water, like a slow moving stream, and is home to many different kinds of plants and animals! You can find bayous all over Louisiana, and in other nearby gulf coast states.

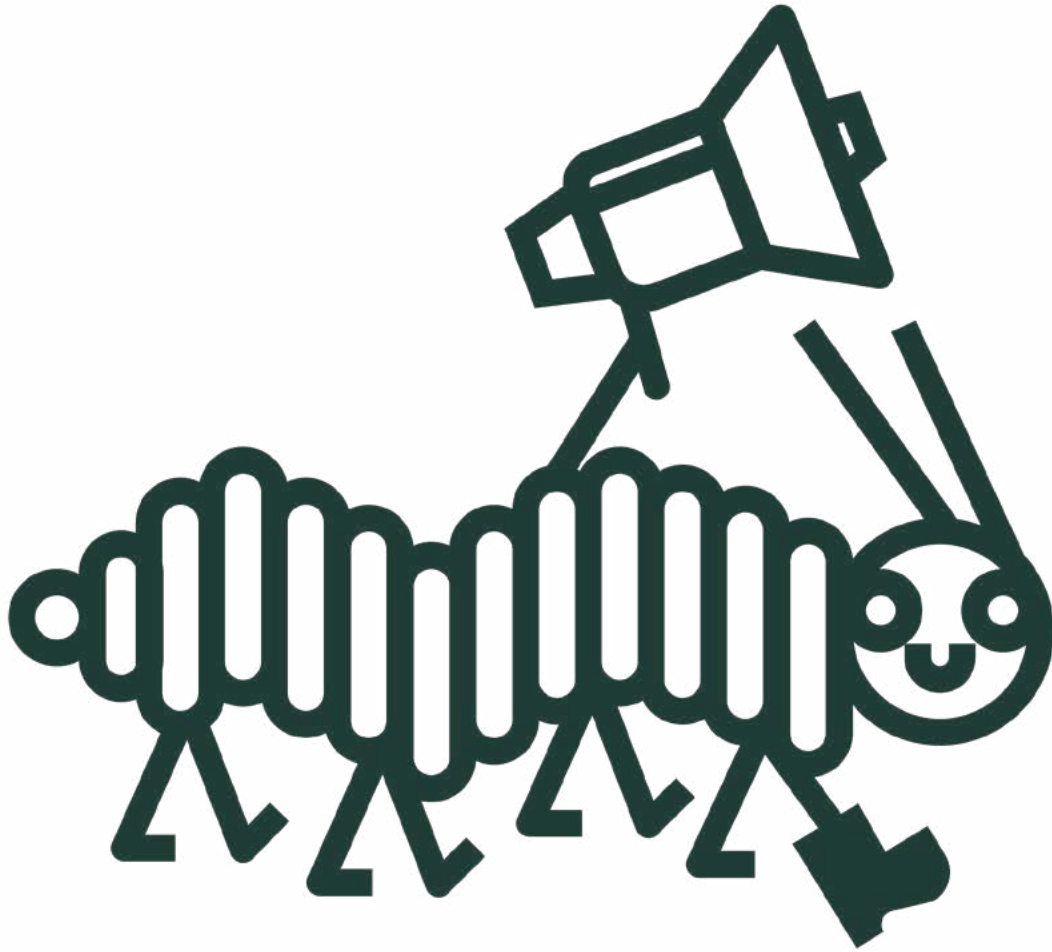


Bruneau, the Bayou, is a great explorer of nature. He can name every plant, animal and insect in the state of Louisiana! As the oldest in the Geaux Far parade, Bruneau moves slow, but he is a steady force of joy, and his many years of experience make him a terrific source of knowledge for the community to Geaux Far.



is for Caterpillar

Louisiana is home to 125 different kinds of caterpillars! When caterpillars grow up, they become a butterfly or moth with beautiful colorful patterns on their wings and body.

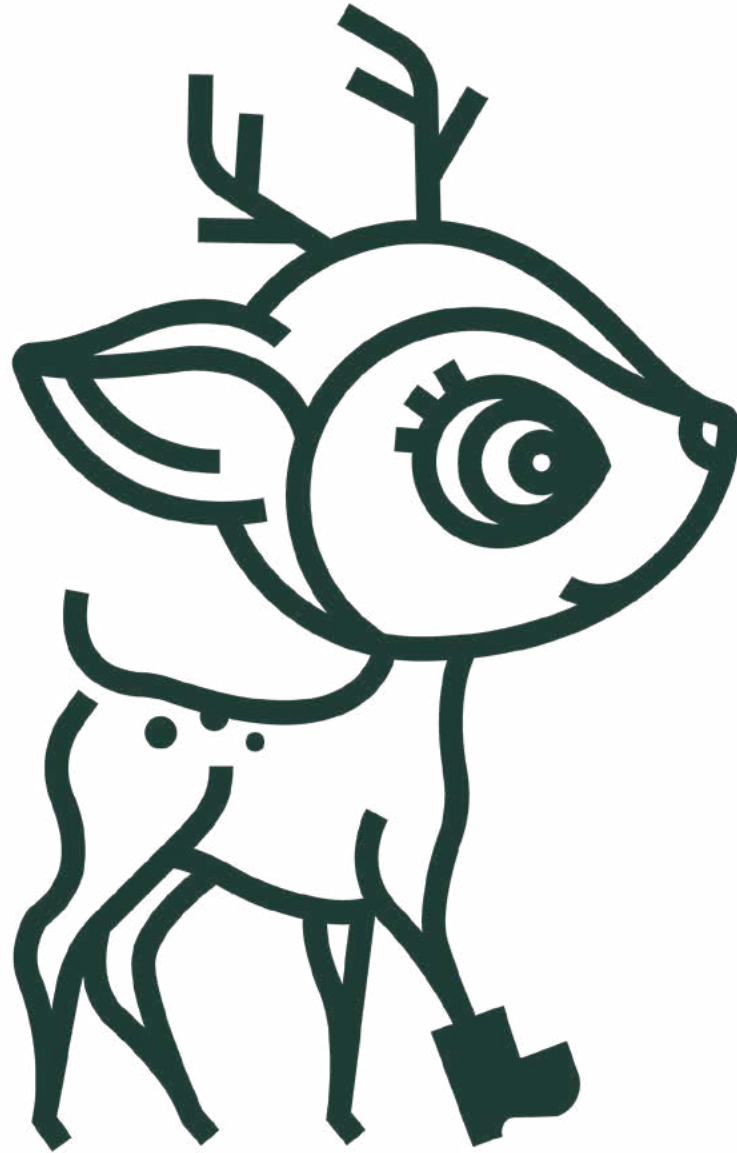


Caddy is a young caterpillar with a strong passion for positive change. One day, she hopes to grow into a butterfly so she can fly around Louisiana, helping those in need from every corner of the state. Even now she's ready to march, advocate, and Geaux Far for Louisiana's Children.



D is for Deer

You can find deer all over Louisiana, even in some coastal areas of the state! The most common species of deer in Louisiana is the white tailed deer. You can identify a white tailed deer by its tail's signature white underside.

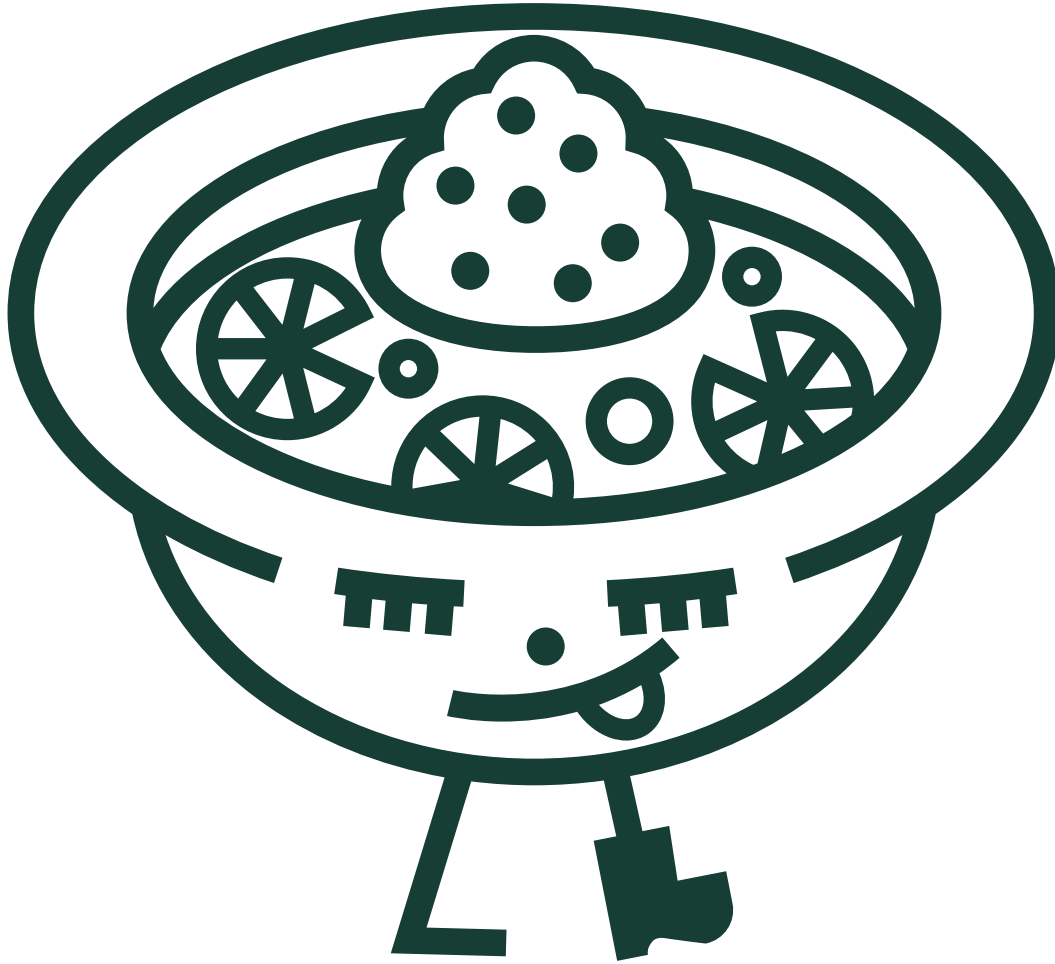


Delphy is a little doe (female deer) who loves to dream and wander the forests in search of adventure! Though she may get lost from time to time, she can always find her way back home using the stars in the Louisiana night sky. Delphy knows she and her friends can truly Geaux Far when they dream big and look to the stars for guidance.



is for Étouffée

This rice dish is served with shellfish such as shrimp, craw-fish, or crab. Popular in southern Louisiana and neighboring states, étouffée dishes can be found in both cajun and creole cuisine!

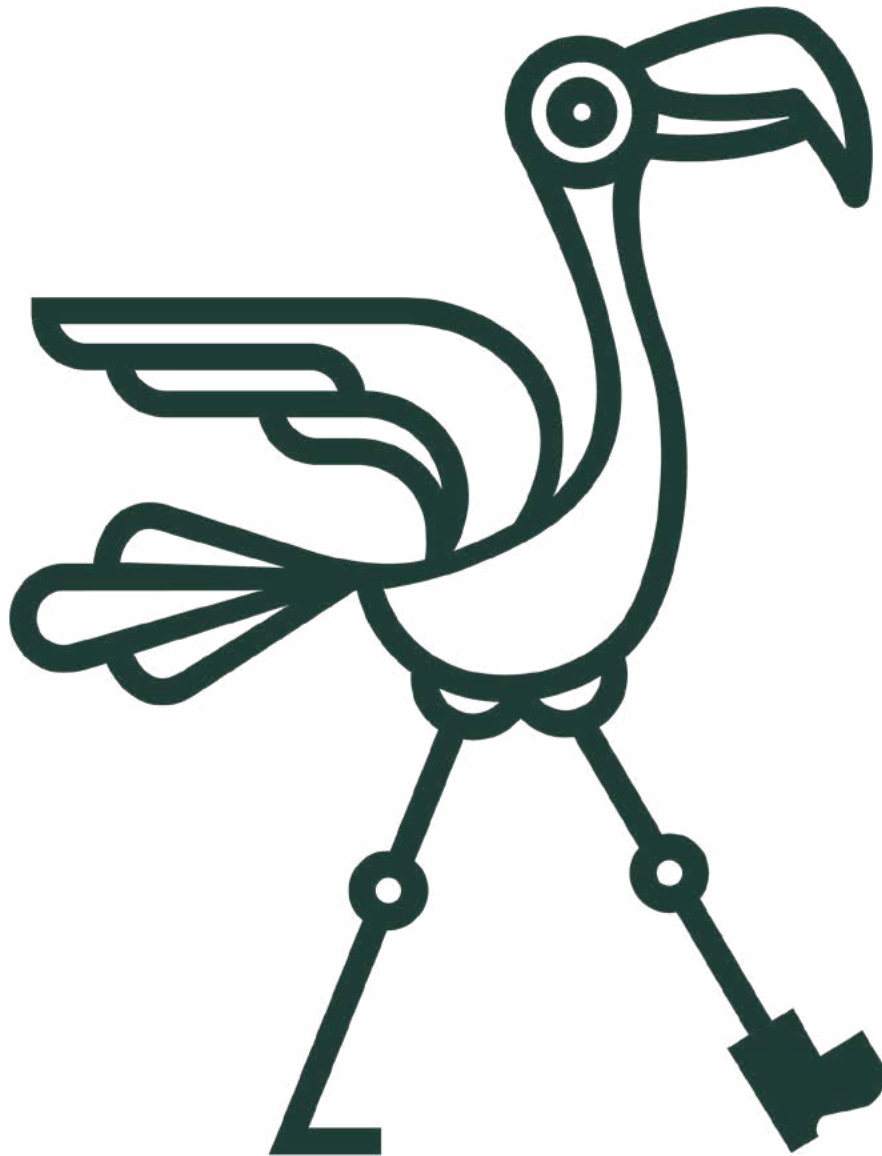


Émile, is a cranky little bowl of étouffée who is often spilling rice, sauce and shellfish wherever he goes. At his core, Émile has a big heart and likes to make sure everyone in the parade stays well fed, so they have plenty of energy to Geaux Far for Louisiana's children!



is for Flamingo

Louisiana is home to the cajun flamingo, a pink often found in shallow waters or canals. These beautiful birds were on the brink of extinction, but in the past 20 years have seen rapid population growth and can now be found all along coastal Louisiana.

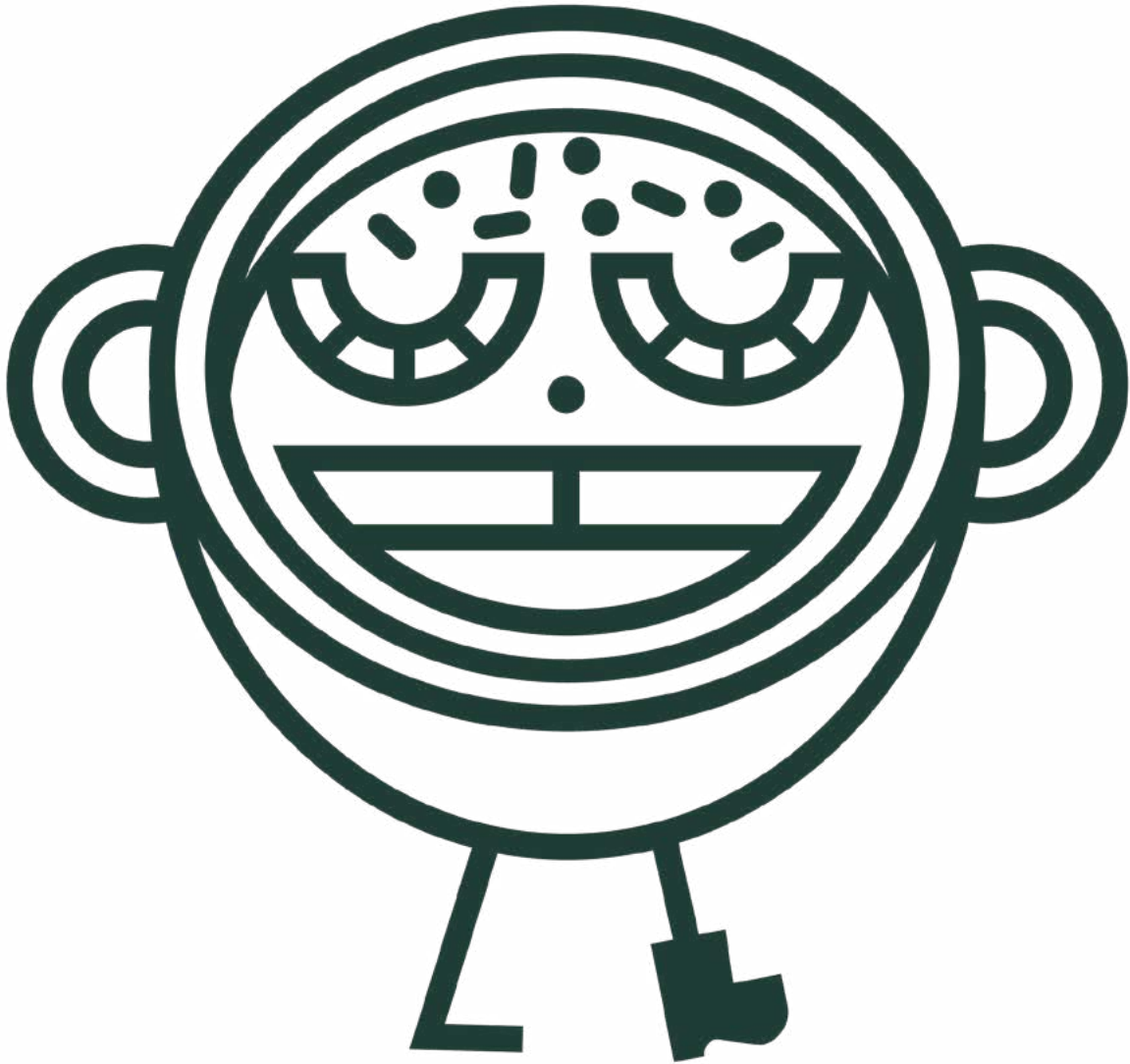


Fla Lipa, is a flamingo who loves to run, jog, or do anything outdoors. She has very high endurance which helps her run for long distances. With her extensive knowledge of the outdoors, Fla Lipa keeps everyone safe and healthy so the parade can Geaux Far for Louisiana's children.



is for Gumbo

Gumbo is the state dish of Louisiana and combines culinary traditions from west african, french, spanish, choctaw, and other native american cultures. Usually eaten during cooler months of the year, gumbo can be made with various vegetables, meats, and shellfish.



Gertrude, a warm bowl of gumbo, is proud of her roots and finds joy in sharing them with others. She loves bringing people together around the table to eat and break bread, especially when it's to Geaux Far for Louisiana's children.

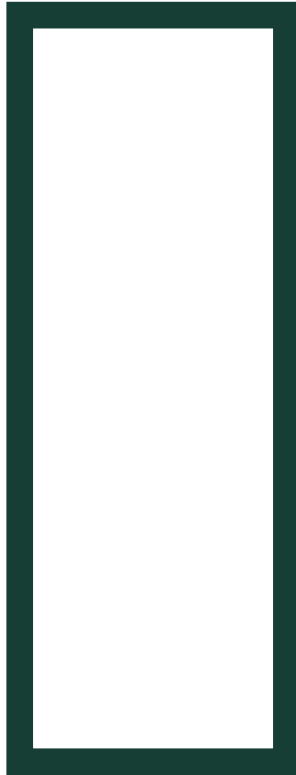


is for Hot Sauce

Humans have been making sauces and seasoning with peppers, the base for hot sauces, for thousands of years! However, modern Louisiana style hot sauce wasn't made until 1928. Hot sauce is a great way to add extra flavor and heat to your favorite foods!



Hotpeppa, a professional chef, likes his surroundings tidy and his food spicy. "Put some pep in your step!" Peppa says, dashing hot sauce onto his friends' plates. Sometimes, a little hot sauce and motivation are just what people need to Geaux Far.



is for Iris

The Louisiana Iris our native flower, but can be found from the lower Mississippi River valley in Illinois and southeast Missouri to the gulf coastal plain.
Look for irises to begin blooming in March and April of each year!



Irvine, the Iris, has a love for ballet dancing and painting! She loves stopping by the art galleries of Royal Street in New Orleans to see the paintings of new artists. Color, movement and creativity bring her joy and inspire her to Geaux Far for Louisiana's children.



is for Jazz

Jazz music is a major music genre that was first created by African-American communities in New Orleans! As the genre spread around the world, it has blended with different cultures creating countless, unique styles of Jazz.

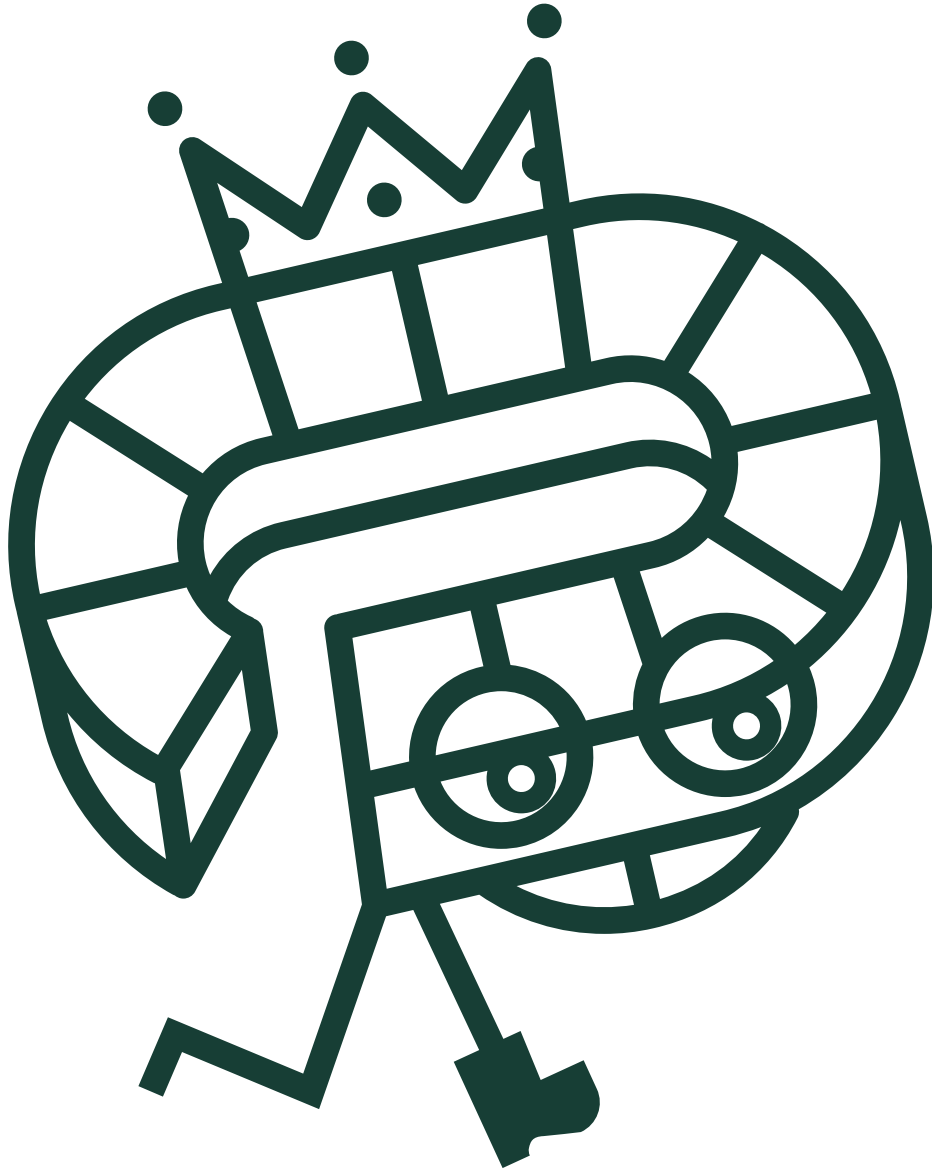


Jake, the Tube Dude, loves music more than anything. He believes there's no better way to lift your spirits than through song and dance. Jake is a skilled Jazz musician, thanks to his big tuba named Mister. Together, Jake and Mister are ready to Geaux Far for Louisiana's children!



is for King Cake

Decorated with yellow, green, and purple icing, King Cake's sweet dough is hiding a special surprise inside! This sweet treat originates from medieval Europe, but in Louisiana it has evolved to become its own unique cultural tradition.

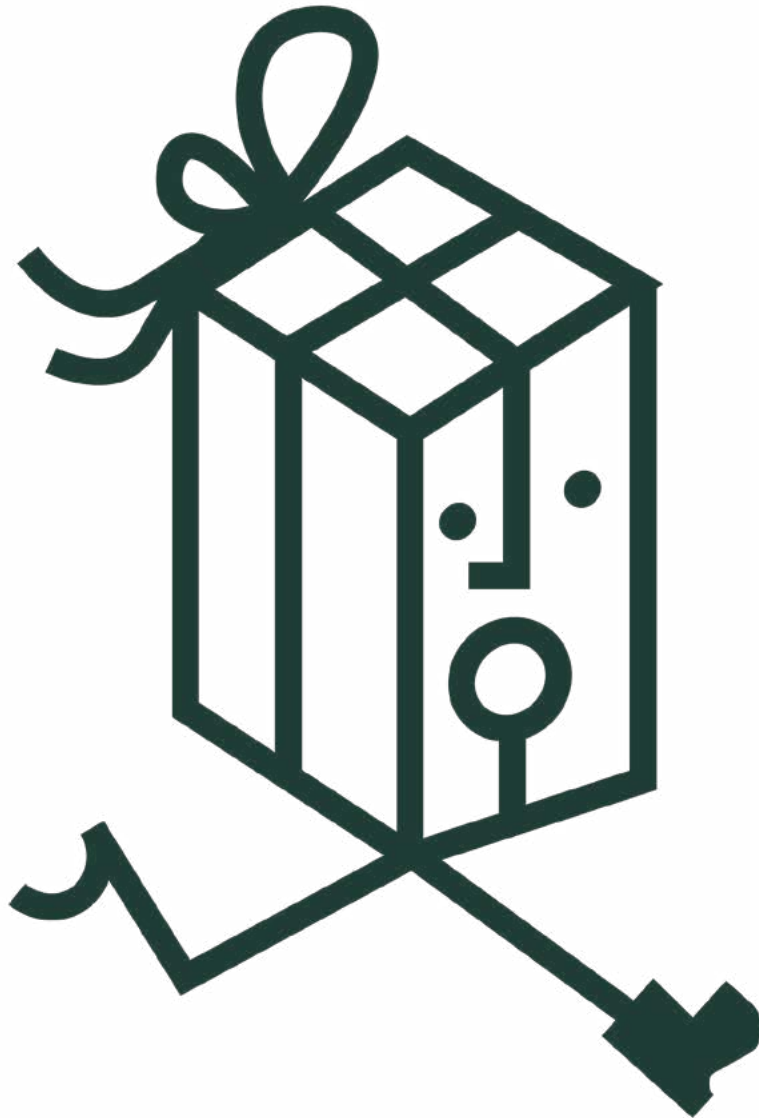


Kong, the King Cake, is a party planner who loves any excuse to celebrate, especially when it's with friends for a good cause or special achievement! Kong knows that small acts of kindness and special surprises Geaux Far to bring people joy.



is for Lagniappe

Lagniappe is a small gift given to someone making a purchase. The word comes from the spanish phrase "la yapa" or "la ñapa" which refers to giving a little bit extra, and is still used in andean markets and in many south american cultures.

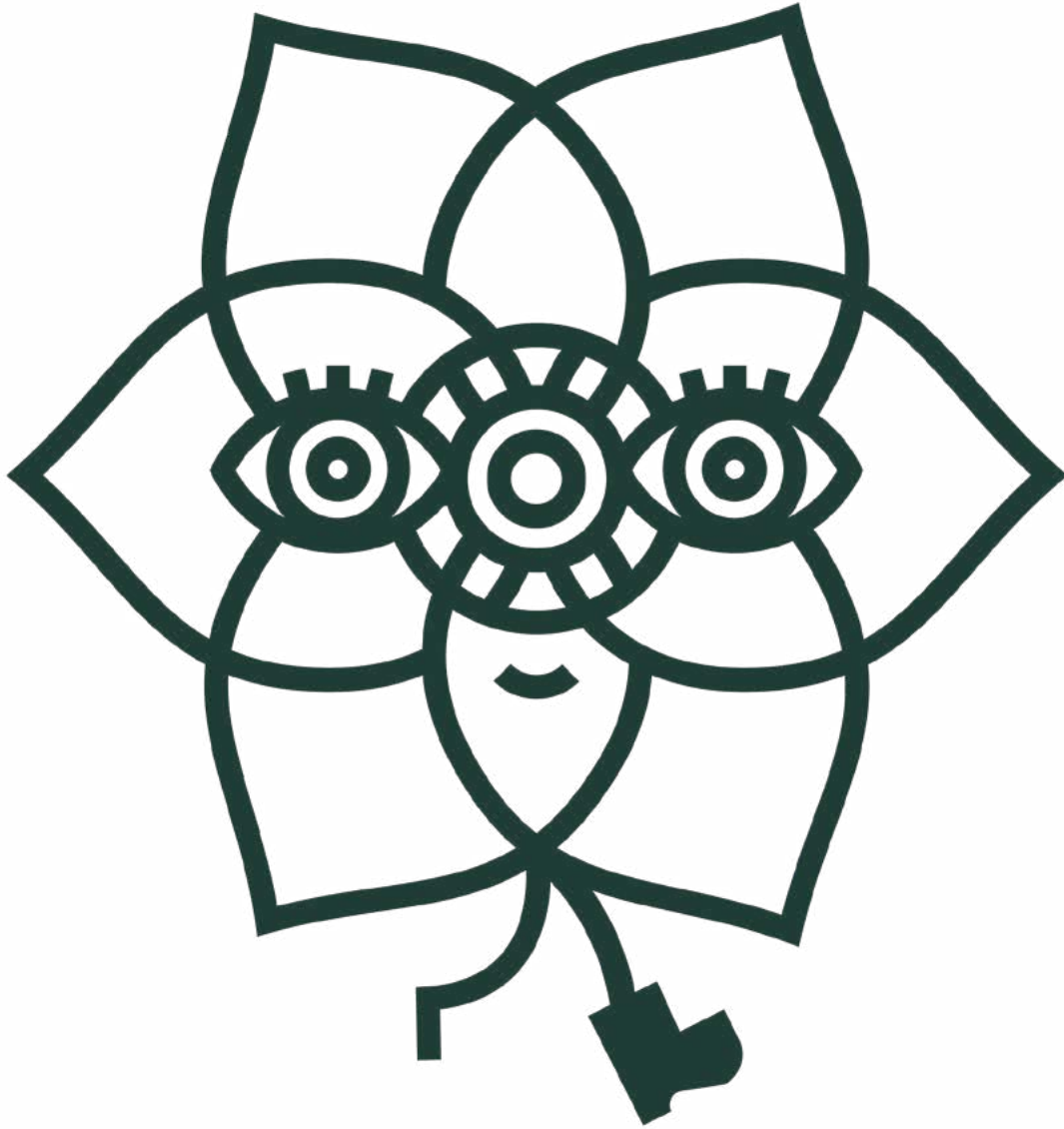


Lupin Lagniappe, the definition of an overachiever, goes the extra mile to take care of her friends in Louisiana! Some might call her dedication extreme or “Extra,” but Lupin sets the example for hard work and endurance among those who aim to Geaux Far.



is for Magnolia

The magnolia flower is the state flower of Louisiana, and can be found all over the state! With their lemony scented flowers and glossy leaves, the magnolia tree is a popular evergreen planted in gardens all over the world.



Maggie Magnolia's favorite time of the year is spring, when she's in full bloom! Like the children of Louisiana, young plants and flowers need lots of love to Geaux Far, so Maggie spends most of her time in her garden, watering the soil and protecting her plant friends from harm.

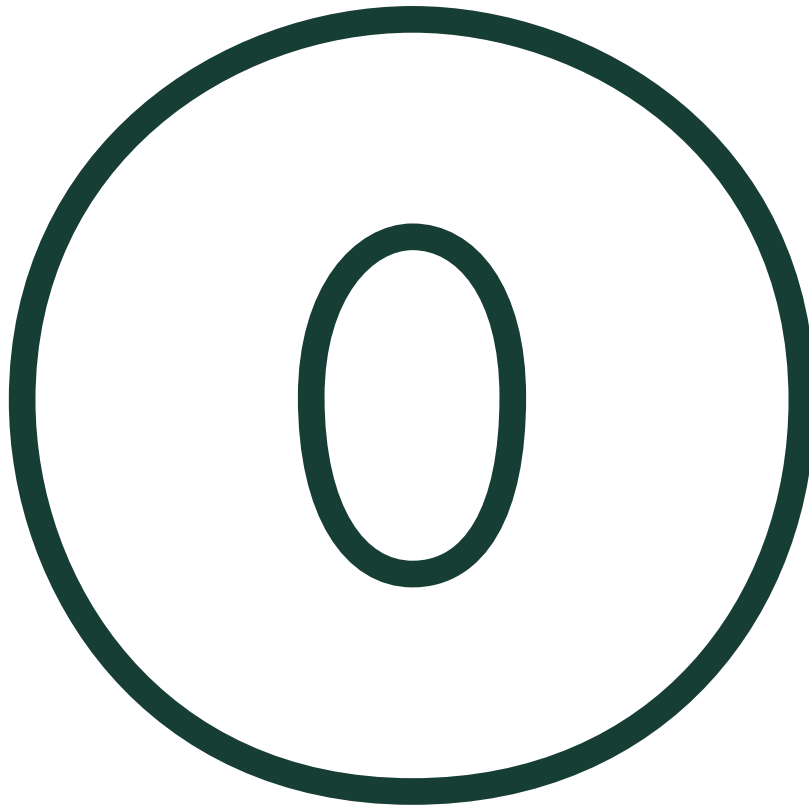


is for Natchitoches

This Louisiana city is named after the native Natchitoches people of Louisiana, and is known for their annual Christmas Festival that has been held since 1927! The city is decorated with over 300,000 lights, from the Saturday before Thanksgiving until Epiphany on January 6th.



Naty, the Tree, is busy each December, hanging and stringing thousands of lights for Louisiana's annual Christmas festival! It's a tiring job, but somebody's got to Geaux Far to spread cheer, especially to those who need it most!



is for Okra

Okra is a vegetable that loves hot and humid climates, like Louisiana! Okra can be cooked in a huge variety of ways, and is often used when making gumbo. Okra is also popular in the cooking of cultures all over the world, including middle eastern, brazilian, and indian cuisine!



Oki, Joe was never bothered by a little sun! As a fully grown successful okra, he prefers the heat and humidity, having grown up on a Louisiana farm. Oki Joe knows that with the right support system and people who care around, any kid can dream big and Geaux Far, like he did, even in this daggone Louisiana heat!



is for Pelican

The brown pelican is the state bird of Louisiana. There's even a pelican on the Louisiana state flag! Pelicans hunt by diving into the water head first, scooping up fish in the large pouch under their bill.

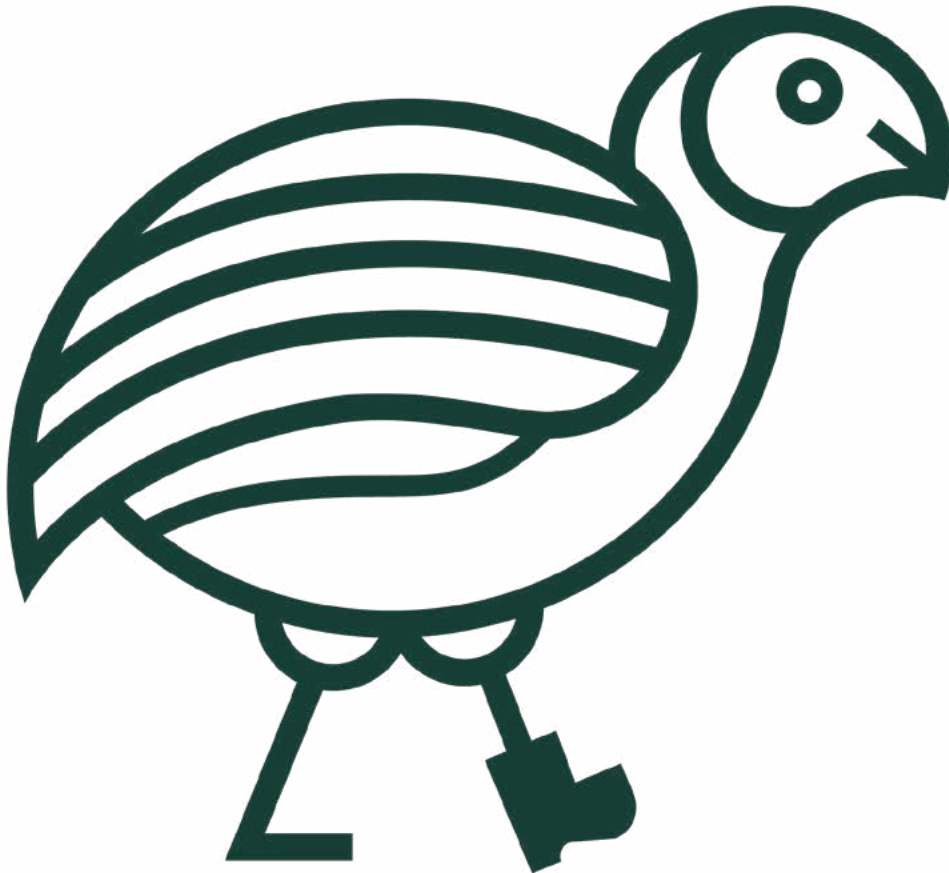


Pedro is a young, skilled fisherman. His sharp eyesight and focus enable him to spot a fish in the water from 65 feet above before swooping down to eat! One day, Pedro hopes to use his talents to feed all the hungry children of Louisiana, so they can focus on learning and Geaux Far.



is for Quail

The bobwhite quail is the most common species of quail, and is the number one game bird in the southern and eastern United States. They live in grassland habitats around Louisiana. However, different species of quail can be found in different habitats all over the world.

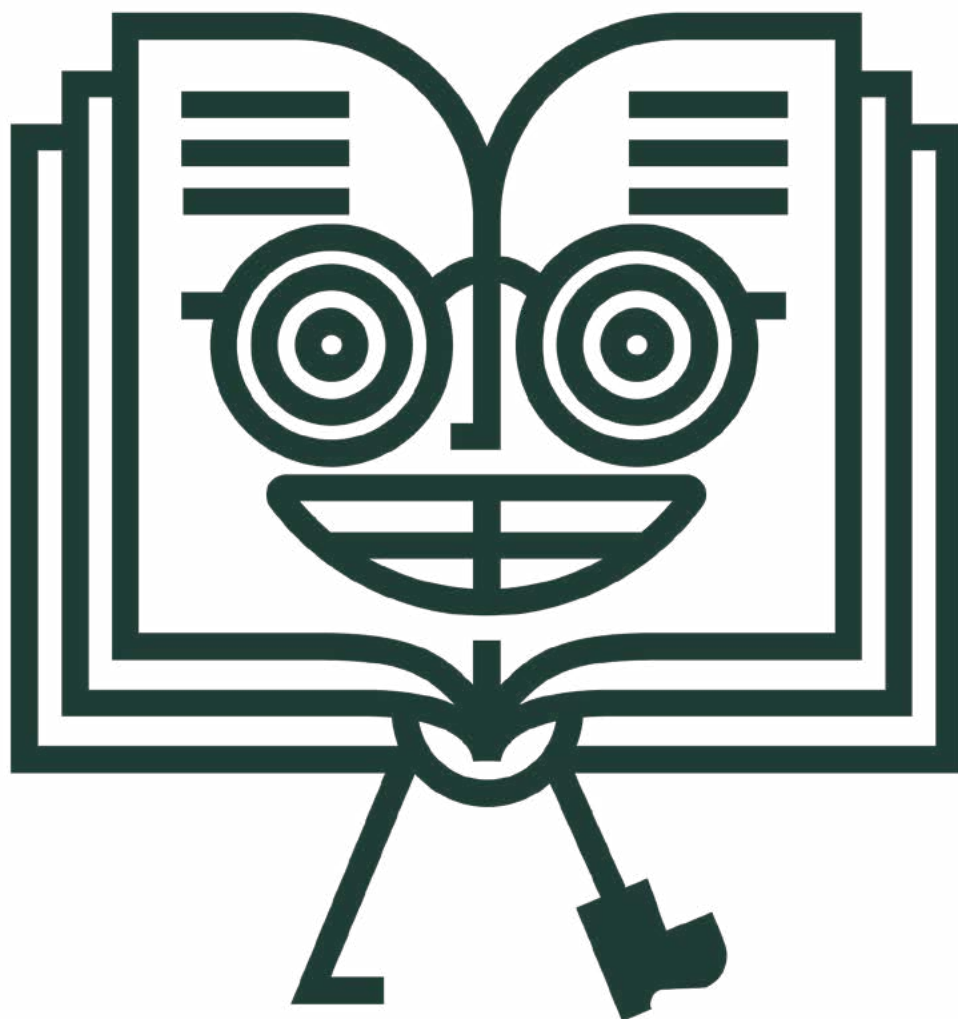


Quentin is a determined, resourceful little quail who loves to teach. She takes pride in accomplishing a lot with a little, and aims to pass these values onto her chicks, ensuring they, too, can Geaux Far for Louisiana's children.



is for Reading

R is for Reading. Did you know the first printing press in Louisiana started operating in 1764?
This allowed books, history, and stories to be printed in Louisiana
at a much faster rate than before!



Roudreaux the Book loves to learn, and his favorite subject to study is the history of Louisiana. Roudreaux also loves to read fiction stories that let his imagination Geaux Far.

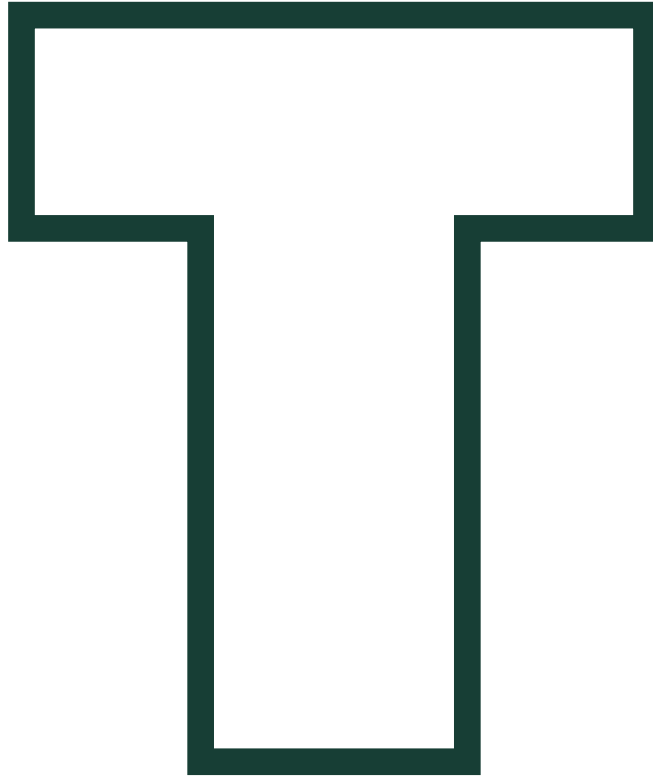


is for Sun

Louisiana is a very sunny state, getting on average 13 hours of sunlight a day! All that sunlight helps Louisiana grow a diverse range of plants, creating the beautiful state we call home!

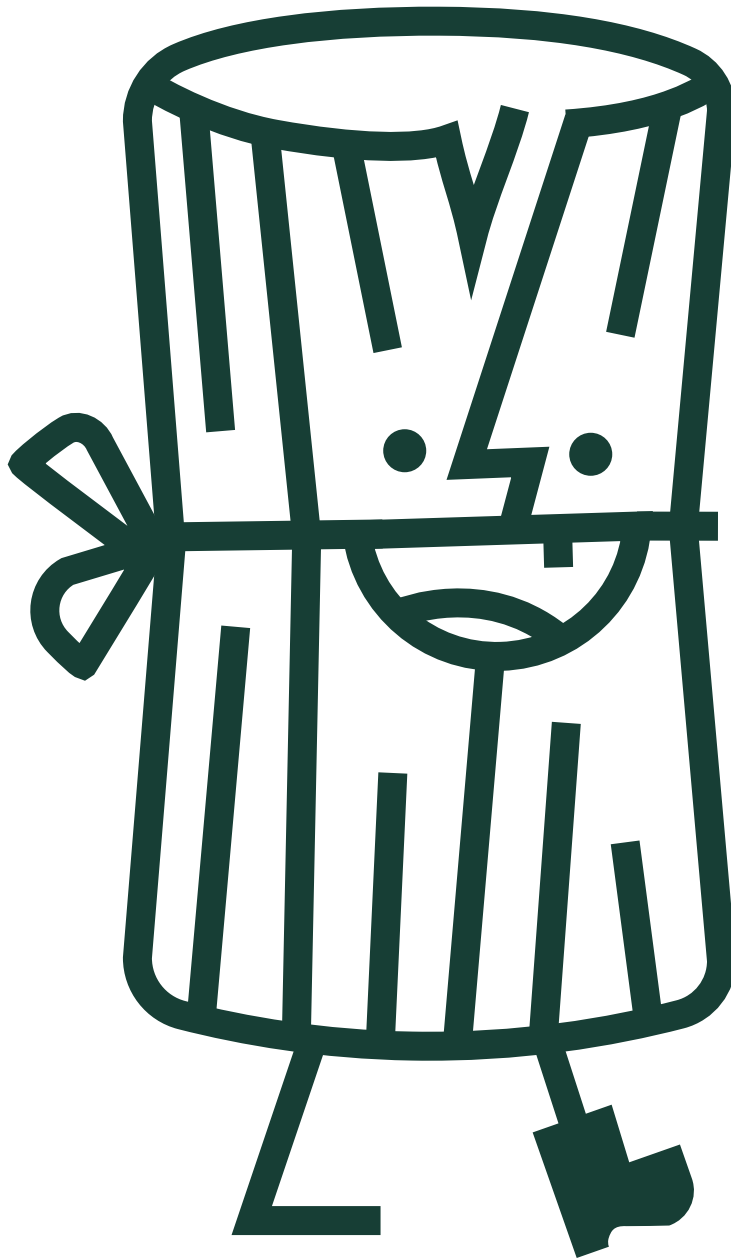


Sonnie's friends say she always brightens the day, wherever she goes. Sonnie loves to keep her friends warm and cozy, and is always reminding them that every day is a brand new day to Geaux Far for Louisiana's Children!



T is for Tamale

Tamales have been around for thousands of years. Made of *masa* (a dough made from ground corn), tamales are often filled with cheese or pork. It's a dish enjoyed all throughout the Americas, including Louisiana! In October of each year, people from all over the world travel to the small town of Zwolle, Louisiana for the Zwolle Tamale Fiesta.



Toto Tamale loves family traditions and passing them down to his young tamales. When we make an effort to understand the cultures of ourselves and others, we can better help the children of Louisiana to Geaux Far.



U is for **Umbrella**

Did you know Louisiana is the second rainiest state in the United States? The Pelican State, coming in right behind Hawaii, averages 50 to 70 inches of rainfall each year. Umbrellas help keep Louisianans dry all throughout the year.



Ursula, keeps the Geaux Far parade up to date on the always changing Louisiana weather forecast! Predicting rain showers and hurricanes, and preparing for all types of weather, can ensure we all Geaux Far for Louisiana's children.



is for Violin

The violin, also known as the fiddle in cajun and creole music, is a bow stringed instrument that first appeared 1500's Italy! Today, the violin is one of the most popular classical instruments and played all throughout the world.

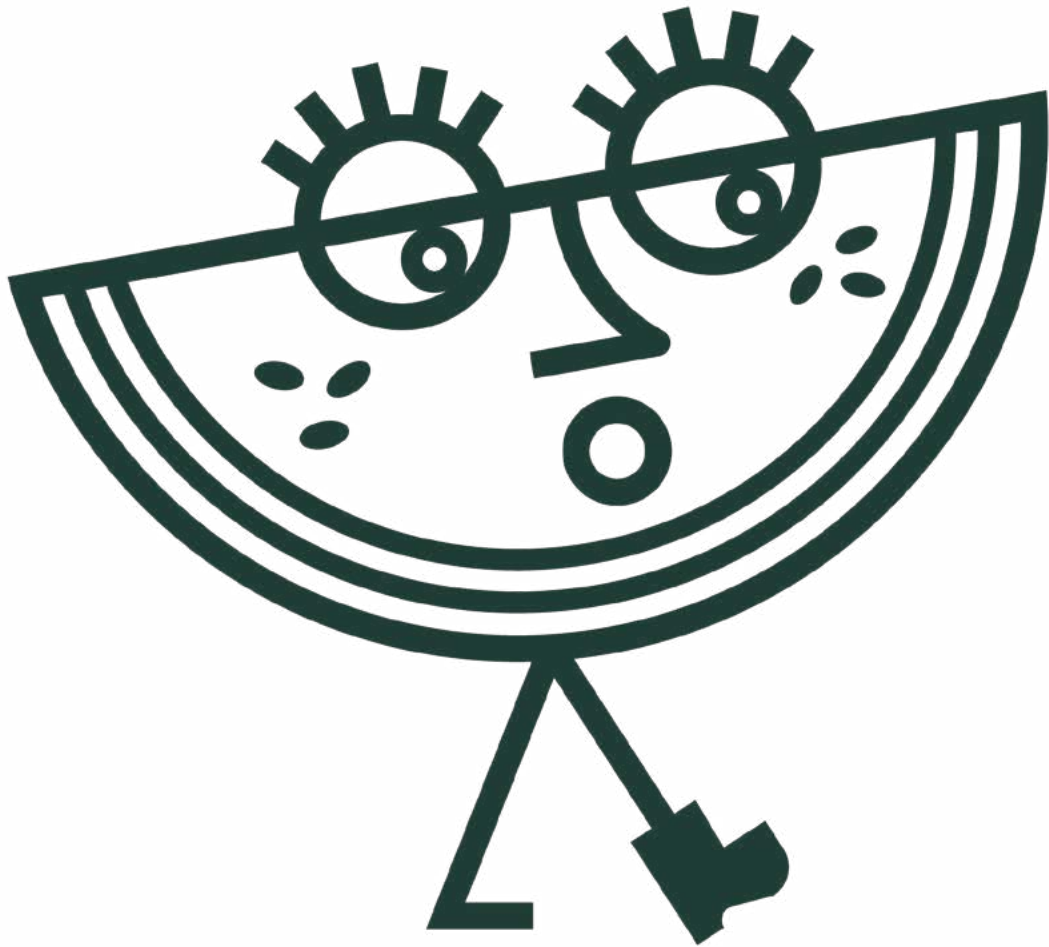


Vinny, the class clown of the parade, is always cracking jokes and keeping his friends' spirits high. A little humor goes a long way, especially when you are working hard to Geaux Far for Louisiana's children!



W is for Watermelon

Did you know the Louisiana state record for largest watermelon weighed a whopping 252 pounds! Originally from the deserts of southern Africa, the watermelon spread around the world thanks to its sweet, juicy inside protected by a hard exterior rind.

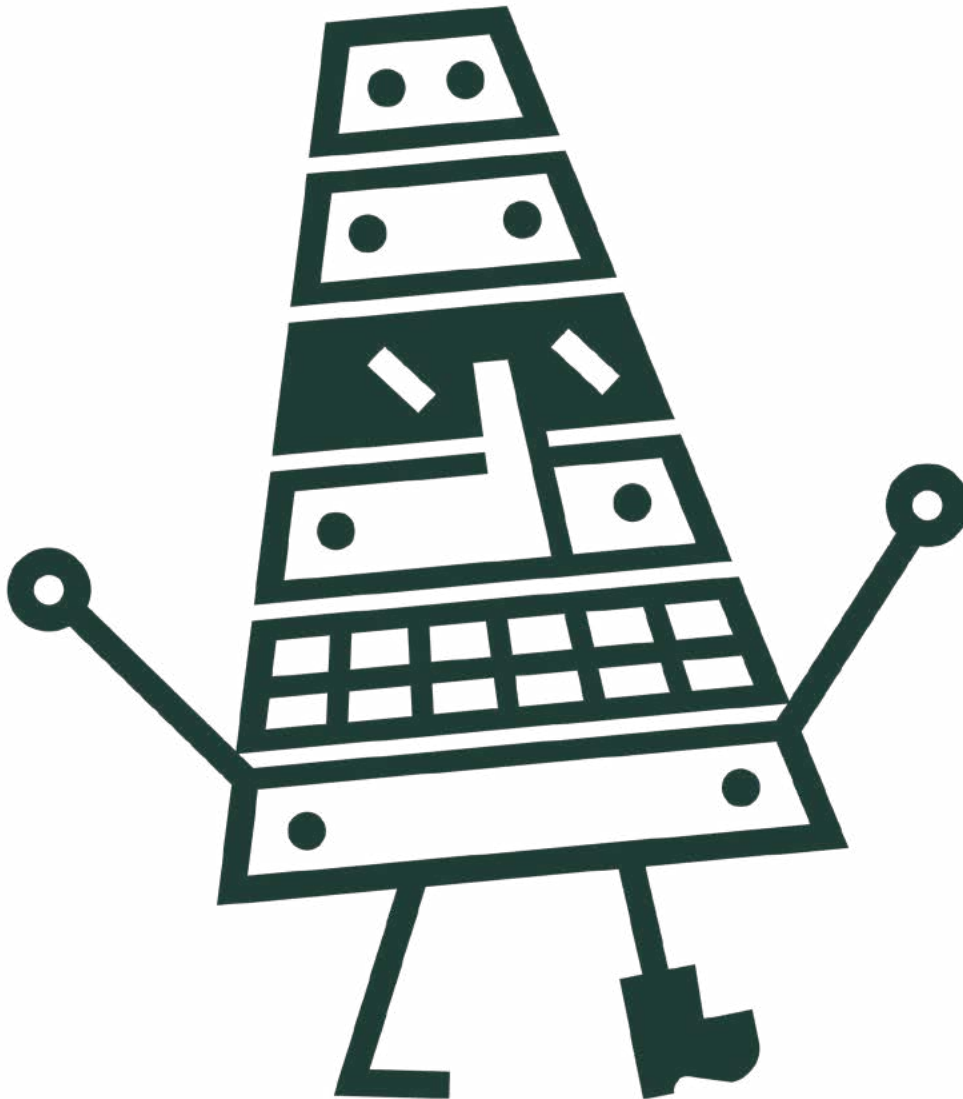


Wanda was a nervous slice of watermelon feeling out of place since she was sliced from her whole, when she first joined the Geaux Far parade. With a little support from her friends, Wanda has come a long way and is feeling whole enough to Geaux Far for Louisiana's children!



is for Xylophone

Also known as the marimba, the xylophone is a wooden instrument that has been around for hundreds of years! A set of tuned wooden planks, or "keys," is arranged in the fashion of the keyboard of a piano. A unique sound is made when the xylophone player strikes the wooden keys with rubber mallets.

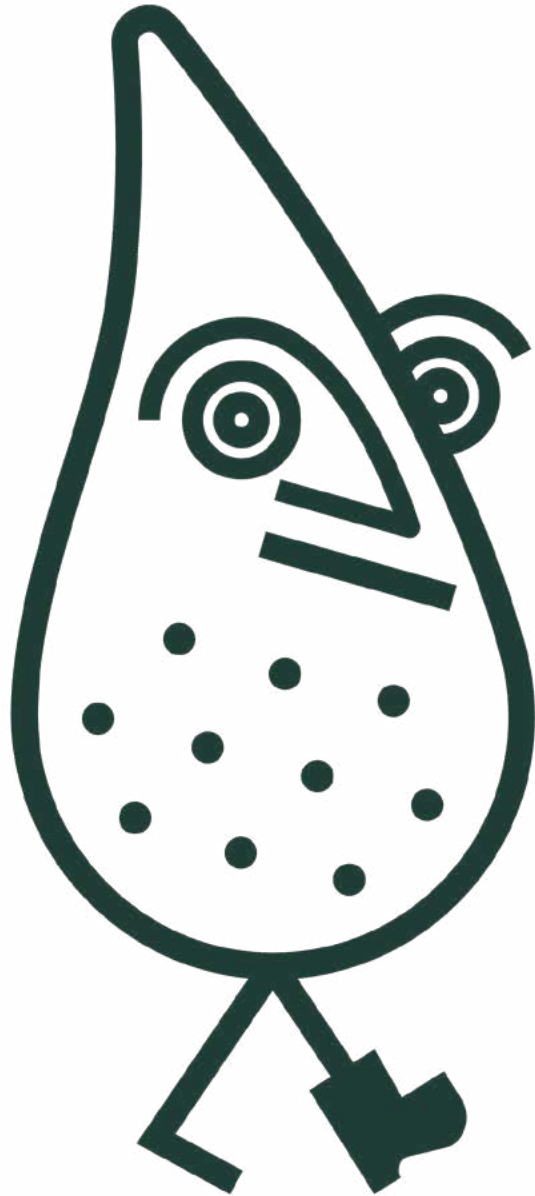


Xenturion, the Xylo can get a little grumpy when the members of his jazz band don't play their notes right. At the end of band practice, though, he always apologizes and the band members know he only wants to be the best. When we leave space to talk through our feelings and understand each other better, we can all Geaux Far for Louisiana's children.



is for Yam

Yams are a root vegetable, meaning the part of the plant that we eat grows underground. They can be boiled, candied, stuffed, fried, mashed or whipped! Yams can grow year round in Louisiana, and are shipped fresh, frozen, and canned all around the country.



Yoyo, is a shy yam with a big heart. He may not talk much, but his kindness and friendship are shown through his actions. Yoyo is usually the first to arrive to the Geaux Far parade, helping the others to get ready for the march!



is for Zydeco

Staple instruments like the accordion and washboard are used to play this unique genre of music native to southwestern Louisiana! Zydeco was created by combining the musical traditions of the Louisiana creoles, and native american people of the area.



Zenia Zydeco embodies the musical tradition of southwest Louisiana. With the stomp of her feet and the upbeat sounds of her washboard and accordion, she and the rest of the parade are sure to Geaux Far for Louisiana's children.



Now that you know our family of characters, go ahead and create your own!
And don't forget to write their story too.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS & FUNDERS



