

ASHFORD

# Ramona Johnson earns degree from Syracuse

Ramona M. Johnson II graduated from Syracuse University in New York on May 13.

Johnson is the daughter of Ramona Ashford Johnson and David Johnson of Kendall Park, NJ.

She is the granddaughter of the late Charlie Ashford, Jr., and Mary Johnson Ashford; and Howard and Martha Johnson of Washington, D.C.

Johnson plans to continue her studies in graduate school, and hopes to become a judge.

She will be working in the Casualty Department at Marsh & McLennan's main headquarters in New York City.

Johnson's sister, Roslyn, will attend the University of North Carolina in the fall.



Ramona Johnson

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## By Gov. James Hodges

Last year, South Carolinians of all ages celebrated a new holiday - a sales tax holiday.

For the first time ever, purchases of clothing and back-to-school items were tax-exempt. South Carolinians could shop tax-free all weekend long.

The response to the sales tax holiday was overwhelming. Sales volume increased 75 to 80 percent over the same weekend the year before. South Carolina merchants estimate they took in an additional \$250 million because of the sales tax holiday. Sales of footwear and apparel doubled. Electronic sales - including computers - went up 80 percent.

Shoppers purchased lots of tax-exempt items. But they also purchased specialty items that weren't tax-exempt. Sales of jewelry and other non-exempt items were up 30 percent during the sales tax holiday.

The sales tax holiday is more than just a back-to-school celebration. It benefits South Carolinians from age eight to 80. Now I'm proud to announce that the sales tax holiday is back. On August 3, 4 and 5, your purchases of clothing and school supplies will be 100 percent tax-free. There are no forms to fill out, and no phone number to call.

If you are a shopper, start planning now to take advantage of these tax-free savings. If you are a merchant, make sure you are ready for extra crowds and higher volume.

As governor, I am committed to targeted tax cuts that improve the