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**ENTERTAINMENT AND ADVERTISING INDUSTRY DOLLARS ADDING UP
IN MISSISSIPPI'S ECONOMY**

Jackson, Miss., March – Big income dollars that come from Hollywood and Madison Avenue may soon be coming to Mississippi and adding to our economy. The Mississippi Film Office has just returned from the prestigious Locations 2001 Global Expo in Los Angeles, California. This 16th annual trade event, sponsored by the Association of Film Commissioners International, (AFCI) was held at the Los Angeles Convention Center on February 23rd & 24th. Over 300 domestic and international film commissions and production service providers from more than 30 countries met with over 3100 representatives of the film, television and advertising industries looking for the perfect location for their next production.

Nearly 60 billion dollars will be spent this year around the world on movies, TV and commercials and the Mississippi Film Office was there to compete for a share of that financial pie. "Location filming not only creates jobs and increases our tax-base, it also enhances local tourism," says Ward Emling, director, Mississippi Film Office. "Producers hire local crews and talent, rent equipment from our local vendors, work out of local offices and editing facilities, stay in local hotels and buy a myriad of other goods and services required for on-location shooting. All that well-earned money stays in Mississippi. And then folks come to see where they filmed A TIME TO KILL or MY DOG SKIP, and buy books by our writers. Films have created a great opportunity for us to spread our literary and visual richness."

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The AFCI publicity machine worked hard to create media support, with over 88 news agencies reporting on or from the show. A half-hour after the show opened, an interview with Emling, the President of the AFCI, on CNN's 'Show Biz Today's was broadcast live to over 180 million people around the world. Additional coverage from other CNN programs syndicated out to television and radio stations around the world increased that audience. ABC and FOX, among others, rolled their cameras as well. The prestigious Los Angeles Times Business Section gave special coverage along with other magazines, newspapers, and Internet news services.

In the process of winning the attention of producers and locations managers, the Mississippi Film Office was especially proud to have won the respect of their peers. "We are extremely proud to have been awarded Second Prize in the Booth Competition – Grand Prize category," said Associate Manager Nina Parikh. (A complete Western town created by the commissions in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming won First Prize.) The independent AFCI judging committee considers all exhibitors regardless of size or budget.

"We are also extremely proud to have received the 1st Place award for Series/Campaign – Color Advertising, Unique Locations and the 1st Place award for Series/Campaign- Color Advertising, Famous Daughters & Sons," said Emling. The AFCI Marketing Awards are a worldwide competition co-sponsored by The Hollywood Reporter, one of the two major trade papers of the show business industry. These international awards highlight excellence in advertising, marketing and promotion by individual film commissions.