

Mississippi Department of
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Division of Tourism Development
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TOURISM RESEARCH CONFERENCE SET FOR SEPTEMBER 28-29

JACKSON, Miss., August 1 – **BEYOND THE NUMBERS: REACHING OUT REGIONALLY**, will be the theme of the Travel and Tourism Research Association's 14th Annual South Central States Conference, September 28-29 at the Lake Terrace Convention Center, Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA) is an international network of travel and tourism research and marketing professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds. The South Central States Chapter is comprised of Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

Richard Cain, Senior Vice President of Marketing at Plog Research, Inc., headquartered in southern California will be the featured speaker at lunch on Thursday, September 28. Plog Research specializes in travel and leisure research.

Other conference moderators and topics include Donna Tarasavage, Mississippi Gulf Coast Convention and Visitors Bureau, "Meetings and Conventions: Trends and Activities;" Michael McCalla, Columbus-Lowndes Convention and Visitors Bureau, "Sports Marketing: Its Impact on Tourism;" Jerome Trahan, AMTRAK Crescent, "Transportation: Rails, Rivers and Trails;" Emy Wilkinson, Corinth Area Tourism Promotion, "Funding for the Development or Expansion of Convention Centers and Arenas;" Dr. Denise Von Herrmann, University of Southern Mississippi, "Research: Its Role in Tourism Planning and Development;" and Robert Ingram, University of Southern Mississippi, "Visitors: Measuring Their Motivation and Impact."

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Tom Van Hying, associate project manager senior, research unit of Tourism Development, a division of the Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development said, "Research is a viable tool for all tourism entities to help quantify the benefits of these efforts. The conference brings together both users and producers of data in the travel and tourism arenas and provides training, informational tools and hands-on application techniques to our members."

The conference is cosponsored by the Hattiesburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, Lauderdale County Tourism Bureau, Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development, Natchez Convention and Visitors Bureau, Oxford Tourism Council, Ridgeland Tourism Commission, Vicksburg Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Fees for the conference are \$100 for TTRA members, \$140 for non-members and \$25 for students. Discounts are available for multiple registrations. The conference hotel is Cabot Lodge in Hattiesburg. For hotel reservations, call (800) 225-9429 and mention TTRA Code 2000.

For additional information, contact Tom Van Hying, associate project manager senior, research of the Mississippi Division of Tourism Development at (601) 359.3297.

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