

Hallmark Flowers Open House
Friday, April 20, 2001
9:00 a.m.
Southaven Facility

Talking Points

- Good Morning
- The journey to bring Hallmark to Mississippi started nearly one year ago.
- A team from Hallmark and the Mississippi Development Authority worked together to make this facility reality.
- We are here today to herald one of Hallmark's newest innovations with the opening of this distribution center.
- And this is another shining example of how business and government can partner for a common good.
- Hallmark chose Mississippi for this distribution center over a number of locations.
- They chose Mississippi because of our quality workers – our excellent quality of life – our quality infrastructure.
- And because we are America's State of Promise.

- Hallmark has developed a streamlined system that takes fresh flowers from the growers to the consumer, as much as one week faster than other companies.
- Mississippi is proud to be a part of a more efficient system that produces a better product.
- Located at the front door of one of the world's largest express shipping companies, Southaven is now the hub for flowers coming from California, South America and Holland.
- No other state is better positioned.
- This is further proof that Mississippi is the ideal location, as the "Center of the Americas."
- Hallmark and Mississippi have joined together - this relationship will contribute directly to the quality of life in our state.
- Our people will continue to prosper through productive, satisfying work.
- Hallmark has brought over 100 new jobs to Southaven and Desoto County.
- That number will grow to nearly 500 in the future.

- This is an investment in the future of Mississippi and our people.
- I would like to acknowledge the men and women who make all of this progress possible.
- Mississippi's workers are among the best in the nation.
- Employers are consistently impressed with the quality and dedication of our people.
- We are committed to keeping the momentum of this project and others like it.
- The Advantage Mississippi Initiative gives Mississippi the competitive advantage that we need to continue to attract new business and industry to our state.
- (Opportunity to insert story about Governor of Georgia)
- The AMI shows our commitment to a stronger, healthier economy – It shows our commitment to a better quality of life for our people, by providing better job opportunities.

- Mississippi is serious about meeting the needs of business – We have sent a signal to the nation that Mississippi is open for business.
- In March, seven Mississippi communities were ranked among the “Top 100 Small Towns for Corporate Facilities” in the United States by Site Selection magazine.
- That speaks volumes for the pro-business climate we are developing in our state.
- Our reach will continue to transcend the borders of our state, and we will redefine the image of the New South.
- Hallmark seeks to help consumers enhance important relationships with unique selection and unsurpassed quality.
- Mississippi shares that mindset, and we are glad to be a part of that ideology and success.