



MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST SELECTS HUDDLE UP GROUP

Phoenix, AZ (December 10, 2015) – Visit Mississippi Gulf Coast, the tourism marketing arm for Harrison, Hancock, and Jackson Counties, has secured the Phoenix based Huddle Up Group, LLC to lead a strategic planning process for their sports and event tourism efforts. The project will be led by Huddle Up Group Founder + CEO Jon Schmieder, and Principal Gary Alexander.

The focus of the project is to develop a long-range plan for the expansion of the Gulf Coast’s venue offering, an evaluation of the organization’s sports tourism and marketing efforts, and to identify opportunities around special events and festivals. Huddle Up Group’s team will conduct community stakeholder interviews, tour venues and hotels, and review the current marketing budget and activities of the organization. A final report including the long-range strategic plan will be issued in the first quarter of 2016.

Huddle Up Group Founder + CEO Jon Schmieder commented on the announcement, “We are excited to partner with the team at Visit Mississippi Gulf Coast on this project. With over 60-miles of beaches and a historically hospitable sports environment, there is great opportunity for future sports tourism success in the area. We look forward to a collaborative process and a great community-wide effort.”

Visit Mississippi Gulf Coast Executive Director Renée Areng elaborated, “Sports tourism is a fast-growing sector of the travel industry. In order to compete in this growing market it is crucial to have the most up-to-date and comprehensive assessment of our sporting facilities. Therefore we have teamed up with the Huddle Up Group, who are leaders in the sports events industry. We are excited about this collaboration and know that through this, the Mississippi Gulf Coast will become an even stronger competitor in the industry.”

Visit Mississippi Gulf Coast joins the Huddle Up Group’s expanding client roster that includes USA BMX, Tulsa Sports Commission, Southern Oregon Sports Commission, Evansville Sports Corp, Fox Cities CVB, Des Moines Sports Commission, Fort Worth CVB, Visit Detroit, Visit Mesa, Eau Claire CVB, Visit Tucson, Las Cruces CVB, Greater Morgantown CVB, USA Badminton, and USA Volleyball among others.

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About the Huddle Up Group, LLC

The Huddle Up Group is a sports tourism consulting company with offices in Arizona, Colorado, and Tennessee. We are led by experienced award winning executives with a successful track record of leading non-profits and sports tourism organizations through strategic growth and increased community collaboration. We have extensive experience in building cohesive organizations and external relationships while working with volunteer boards, donors, and community partners. Specifically, we have led our client's organizations to successful outcomes in the areas of (1) Sports commission development, (2) Sports tourism expansion through both created and bid events, (3) Revenue generation, (4) Venue evaluation and development, (5) Organizational growth through community collaboration and strategic planning, (6) Board facilitation and governance, and (7) Youth programming through camps, clinics and after-school enrichment programs.

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