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Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing, Doing Business in Chile!, Mississippi Blues Trail Goes National, Changzhou Meets Mississippi: Trade and Investment Opportunities Forum, Informative Workshop for Mississippi Market

In this Issue:

- [MDA Announces Availability of State's Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program's Substantial Amended Action Plan Draft; Public Comments Invited through May 6](#)
- [U.S. Commercial Service to Host Doing Business in Chile! May 7 in Jackson](#)
- [Mississippi Blues Trail Goes National; Upcoming Marker Unveilings to Take Place in Memphis, Chicago](#)
- [Changzhou Meets Mississippi: Trade and Investment Opportunities Forum to be held in Jackson May 21](#)
- [MDA Holds Informative Workshop for Upcoming Mississippi Market; Urges Partners to Share Market Information with Local Retailers](#)

MDA Announces Availability of State's Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program's Substantial Amended Action Plan Draft; Public Comments Invited through May 6

MDA's Community Services Division recently released its Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) Substantial Amended Action Plan Draft in response to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) requirement that the State submit an amendment to its 2008 Consolidated One-Year Action Plan. The amendment, which is based on an estimated HPRP allocation of \$13,348,427, sets forth the State's method of distributing the anticipated funds under the HPRP. A list of eligible program activities include: financial assistance, housing relocation and stabilization services, data collection and evaluation and administration.

HPRP, a component of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*, was created to provide temporary financial assistance and housing relocation and stabilization services to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless or help those who are experiencing homelessness.

A draft copy of the plan is available at www.mississippi.org/csd. Public comments are invited and will be accepted through May 6, 2009. Comments should be made in writing to MDA's Community Services Division, P.O. Box 849, Jackson, MS, 39205-0849. Inquiries regarding the plan should be directed to Steve Hardin or Tracey Giles at (601) 359-3179.

U.S. Commercial Service to Host *Doing Business in Chile!* May 7 in Jackson

The U.S. Commercial Service, the trade and promotion unit of the International

Trade Administration, will host *Doing Business in Chile!* on May 7, 2009, from 7:45 a.m. - 10:45 a.m., at the Mississippi World Trade Center, 175 East Capitol Street, Jackson, MS, 39201.

Co-sponsored by MDA, the Mississippi World Trade Center and the District Export Council, the event will feature international trade specialists who will discuss opportunities for trade and investment in Chile. The seminar will provide attendees with an overview of the Chilean market, market entry strategies, trade statistics and export trends. It will also provide information regarding the extension of credit to clients to help ensure success, methods of shipping and documents related to foreign trade with Chile.

For those unable to attend the event, it will also be available via webinar. To join the webinar, please click [here](#) and enter your name and e-mail address. Enter the password "rboxx," and then click "Join Now." To join the audio conference only, please call 1-866-469-3239, and enter the following access code: 591 757 141.

For information concerning the event or registration, please visit www.buyusa.gov/jackson. The registration deadline is May 6, so be sure to register quickly!

Mississippi Blues Trail Goes National; Upcoming Marker Unveilings to Take Place in Memphis, Chicago

As the Mississippi Blues Trail continues to honor Mississippi's blues artists and the people and places that have helped shape the state's rich blues heritage, the trail is now going national with marker unveilings scheduled in Memphis, Tenn., and Chicago, Ill.

On Friday, May 8, at 11:30 a.m., following the annual Blues Music Awards ceremony in Memphis, the Mississippi Blues Commission and the Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau will unveil the first out-of-state Blues Trail marker near Beale Street in front of the Fed Ex Forum. The marker will highlight Beale Street and the entire City of Memphis for their great contributions to the blues. Also, on Thursday, June 11, the Blues Trail will make its debut in Chicago, honoring the migration of southerners to the city. According to Alex Thomas, MDA Mississippi Blues Trail Director, some of the best musicians to ever play the blues migrated to Chicago. The time and location for the Chicago unveiling have yet to be announced.

Created by the Mississippi Blues Commission, the Mississippi Blues Trail is funded through grants from MDA, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, Mississippi Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Delta State University and participating communities. To learn more, and to see a list of upcoming events, please visit www.msbluestrail.org.

Changzhou Meets Mississippi: Trade and Investment Opportunities Forum to be held in Jackson May 21

MDA, the U.S. - China Chamber of Commerce and the Changzhou Municipal Government will host *Changzhou Meets Mississippi: Trade and Investment Opportunities Forum* on Thursday, May 21, at the Jackson Convention Complex in downtown Jackson. The forum will provide Mississippi business representatives the opportunity to meet and network with business leaders and officials from

Changzhou, China, who will be visiting the state to explore investment and trade opportunities. The delegation, which will consist of representatives from the automotive, aviation, telecommunications, biotechnology, energy and other sectors, will be seeking information to make informed business location decisions and identify business partners in Mississippi.

Speakers at the event will include Governor Haley Barbour, Gray Swoope, MDA executive director, Siva Yam, president of the U.S. - China Chamber of Commerce, Pan Dongling, director of the Changzhou Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Bureau, Han Jiuyun, vice mayor of Changzhou Government and Thomas Zhang, director of the Changzhou International Investment Promotion Center. A representative from the Chinese Consulate General in Houston will also speak during the event.

For more information or to register for the event, please call (601) 359-3155, or e-mail sbanyard@mississippi.org.

MDA Holds Informative Workshop for Upcoming *Mississippi Market* ; Urges Partners to Share Market Information with Local Retailers

In preparation for the *2009 Mississippi Market Wholesale Show*, which will take place June 4-5 at the Mississippi Trade Mart in Jackson, MDA's Existing Industry and Business (EIB) Division recently held its yearly Exhibitor Workshop at the Electric Power Associations building in Ridgeland. The workshop is held for exhibitors participating in the show, and it is intended to provide an overview of the criteria and issues involved in preparing a product to sell and exhibit. Approximately 40 of Mississippi's budding entrepreneurs, veteran business owners and artists attended the workshop, which covered topics such as: *Planning, How to Create a Successful Exhibit, Retailer Relations, How to Sell at Wholesale Shows* and more. Additional seminars geared toward both exhibitors and retailers will be held both days of this year's event.

Mississippi Market was created in 1996 by the EIB Division to assist small Mississippi business owners and artists in marketing their products to credentialed retail buyers from around the region, in turn generating sales for participating vendors. A typical mix of Mississippi-made products that can be found at the show includes: gifts, jewelry, home accents, personal accessories and gourmet foods. MDA is asking its partners to promote *Mississippi Market* to local business owners and artists, as all Mississippi-based companies with products for resale in stores are encouraged to exhibit. For more information about the show, please visit www.mississippiarket.org, or call 1-888-886-3323.

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