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DreamWorks Studios Announces Plans to Film Movie Based on Mississippi Author's Best-Selling Novel in Greenwood

Officials from DreamWorks Studios have announced plans to film *The Help*, a motion picture based on Mississippi native Kathryn Stockett's best-selling novel of the same name, in Mississippi. The majority of the filming, which is set to begin mid-July, will take place in Greenwood and the surrounding area. The novel is set in Jackson in the 1960s.

During production, up to 150 cast and crew members will live and work in LeFlore County and Greenwood. According to Gray Swoope, MDA executive director, film production projects have a tremendous positive impact on a community's economy, as they create jobs for local residents and new business opportunities for area businesses. Additionally, cast and crew members leave millions in expenditures ranging from office supply stores to hotels and restaurants, further boosting the area's economy.

The Mississippi Motion Picture Incentive Program, which is administered by MDA, was a major factor in bringing the project to the state. The program provides a rebate to film production projects based on their expenditures in the state.

To learn more about Kathryn Stockett and her novel, *The Help*, please visit www.kathrynstockett.com.

Mississippi Residents Taking Advantage of State Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate Program; Over 50 Percent of Available Program Funds Reserved

The State Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate Program (SEEARP), a first-come, first-served rebate program encouraging Mississippians to replace energy inefficient appliances with new ENERGY STAR®-qualified appliances, kicked off April 22 in Mississippi. Designed to stimulate the state's economy with the purchase of new appliances, the SEEARP offers rebates ranging from \$50 to \$750 depending on the type of qualified appliance purchased. To date, 54 percent of the available program funds have been reserved for rebates.

According to Manning McPhillips, MDA stimulus director, there has been great interest in the program. Many Mississippi residents have visited their local retailers to take advantage of the program, and many retailers have reported that it has created enormous economic activity for their stores.

MDA encourages anyone interested in this one-time rebate program to act quickly to purchase eligible appliances and reserve rebates while funds remain; the SEEARP will conclude as soon as all funds have been expended. The amount of available rebate funds listed on the SEEARP website will be updated automatically as applications are processed. Mississippians can check the amount of program funds remaining, view a list of eligible appliances and apply for a rebate by visiting www.MississippiRebate.com or by calling (877) 304-4451.

BP Releases Commercial Encouraging Travelers to Visit Gulf Coast

In an effort to inform travelers that the Gulf Coast is "open for business" following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill off the coast of Louisiana last month, officials from BP, which leases the Deepwater Horizon, have released a 30-second television commercial and radio spot informing travelers that the Gulf Coast's "beaches are clean, seafood is fresh and national parks are open."

MDA Tourism Division Director Mary Beth Wilkerson said the advertising campaign was produced and placed by BP to help combat negative press and send the message that the beaches of Mississippi, Alabama and Florida are open and clean. She said that MDA was happy to provide the Mississippi Tourism logo, which can be seen at the end of the commercial.

To view the commercial, please [click here](#).

Governor Haley Barbour, MDA Tourism Division Unveil Online "Agri Tours Trail" and "Culinary Trail"

In recognition of National Travel and Tourism Week, Governor Haley Barbour last week unveiled two new statewide-themed itineraries for

travelers that highlight the state's agricultural attractions and unique dining experiences. The itineraries, the "Agri Tours Trail" and the "Culinary Trail," take visitors on an online tour and provide information regarding the numerous sites around Mississippi that are part of these new trails.

According to MDA Tourism Director Mary Beth Wilkerson, it is not unusual to share Mississippi's culture and heritage with guests, especially through the state's culinary delights, and the trails and itineraries are platforms on which Mississippi can showcase its tourism product to the world.

Tourism in Mississippi is a \$5.6 billion industry. The industry provides over 78,000 jobs with \$1.6 billion in payroll, ranks sixth in total statewide employment and attracts 19 million visitors each year. For more information about tourism in Mississippi and to view the "Agri Tours Trail" and the "Culinary Trail," please visit www.VisitMississippi.org.

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