

# Mississippi Gulf Coast 3.0

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## Three Years after Hurricane Katrina

**Prepared August 2008 by the Gulf Coast Business Council Research Foundation**

Three years after one of the greatest natural disasters in America, the Mississippi Coast continues to rebuild and create more opportunities for sustained prosperity. Though challenges like affordable housing and insurance remain, the economic renaissance of the region promises a bright future and a better quality of life for more people. In this report are milestones, statistics, and commentary that illustrate our progress and challenges three years after Hurricane Katrina. For more information regarding this report, please contact Brian Sanderson at the Gulf Coast Business Council Research Foundation at 228-897-2020.

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# People and Jobs

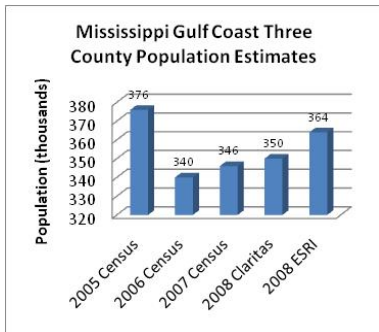


Table - MDES reported Job Types by Classification  
 Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties

	June 05	January 06	June 08	June 08 vs June 05
Manufacturing	21,660	20,400	20,980	(680)
Non Manufacturing	141,570	125,720	139,250	(2,320)
Agri., Forestry, etc	70	70	70	0
Mining	20	40	30	10
Utilities	1,980	1,800	1,820	(160)
Construction	7,170	10,640	11,410	4,240
Wholesale Trade	2,250	2,200	2,450	200
Retail Trade	18,990	18,320	18,510	(480)
Transp & Warehousing	3,800	3,170	3,250	(550)
Information	2,860	2,480	2,500	(360)
Finance & Insurance	3,920	3,670	3,830	(90)
Real Estate/Prop Mgt	1,970	1,820	1,930	(40)
Prof. Services	5,940	5,890	6,570	630
Executive	1,360	1,280	1,210	(150)
Waste Mgt	9,140	9,170	9,710	570
Educational Services	550	490	550	0
Health Care	11,970	9,680	10,750	(1,220)
Arts, Entertain & Rec.	280	310	320	40
Acc. & Food Serv	33,680	19,850	28,210	(5,470)
Other Serv	3,540	3,320	3,210	(330)
Government	32,080	31,520	32,920	840
Education	9,690	9,020	9,530	(160)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>163,230</b>	<b>146,120</b>	<b>160,230</b>	<b>(3,000)</b>
% of pre-Katrina	100%	90%	98%	

- Population for the three coastal counties is estimated to be at 96% of 2005 levels, after losing approximately 40,000 residents after Katrina (reference chart to left<sup>1</sup>).
- In a June 2008 study of active residential utility accounts in the three Coast counties, the number of active residential accounts is at 97.6% of August 2005 levels. At a low point in 2005, one company surveyed had lost nearly 30% of its accounts, and this number did not include accounts that were still active because of FEMA trailer electric service connections.

Table: Number of active residential hookups

	Hancock	Harrison	Jackson	Total
Aug 2005	26,123	83,592	58,218	167,933
Jun 2008	23,574	81,711	58,084	163,369

Source: Mississippi Power, Coast Electric, Singing River Electric

- According to a June 2008 Labor Market Data released by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES), the overall civilian labor force in the three coastal counties is estimated to be at 96% of where it was before Katrina.
- At one point after the storm it was estimated that at least 45,000 people were out of work with unemployment rates exceeding 20%<sup>2</sup>. In June 2008 combined unemployment for the Mississippi Coastal counties was 6.6%.
- The number of construction, wholesale trade, and government jobs have all seen increases in the coastal counties, while accommodations & food services, health care and social assistance, manufacturing, transportation & warehousing, and retail trade jobs have not fully recovered. (Reference the table to the left).
- Relative to the 2000 Census, estimated 2008 figures<sup>3</sup> show that the number of 20-44 year olds has declined in Hancock and Harrison Counties and stayed flat in Jackson County. Hurricane Katrina likely contributed to this. The population of people over 45 years of age has increased. It is critical that the Mississippi Coast continues to work to retain this 20-44 year old demographic.

# The Economy

Construction related growth compared to retail

	Building Mat & Contracting	As % of 2005	F&B and Gen Merch/ Apparel	As % of 2005
2005	1,044,690	100%	2,091,891	100%
2007	3,264,793	313%	2,180,289	104%
2008	2,707,689	259%	2,299,864	110%

Source: MS Tax Commission (2008 is an estimate)

## Examples of Investor Confidence in Coast in 2008

### Promenade D' Iberville

This retail development will consist of 11 anchors (700,000 square feet of commercial space), specialty shops, and restaurants and will open in 2009.

### Harbor Town Pass Christian

This mixed use development is proposed under the SmartCode approach and will include 28,000 square feet of commercial space. Downtown Pass Christian is undergoing a \$7.9 million renovation.

### Sam's Wholesale Club -Gulfport

Sam's is building a new facility north of I-10 on Highway 49, across the street from the booming Crossroads shopping complex in Gulfport. Best Buy will also be reinvesting in the area.

- Construction and rebuilding not only stabilized the economy on the Mississippi Coast in the months after the storm, but also propelled revenues to new highs; in fact, the entire State of Mississippi saw a boom. Overall sales tax diversions to the eleven cities on the Mississippi Coast exceeded \$60 million in FY 2008, or 114% of the \$53 million collected in FY 2005. Note that fiscal year (FY) ends June 30.<sup>4</sup>
- Sales tax collections were driven by the incredible growth in the construction related industries. Reference the table in the left hand column for an example of how construction related industries exploded while others, such as food and beverage and general merchandise, did not see such robust growth.
- While the overall economy of the Mississippi Coast has fared well, even while the national economy struggles, there are still areas of the Mississippi Coast that are challenged primarily by a lack of rebuilding in the immediate vicinity. There are several factors contributing to these issues, but most are located near the beach and the most prevalent inhibitor has been insurance, which is either not affordable or not attainable.
- GO Zone legislation, particularly interest free bond financing and bonus depreciation, has spurred a wave of economic development on the Gulf Coast. Recent legislation that removed the minimum start date for projects (they must be in service by December 31, 2010) should facilitate even more construction starts. To the left are examples of significant commercial projects that have materialized since Katrina.
- The United States Government Printing Office (GPO) was given approval by Congress to establish a secure projection facility at Stennis in Hancock County. The operation will be used to make passports. In 2007 the GPO produced more than 20 million passports, up 50% from 2006.
- Recently Future Pipe announced that it would be closing its Gulfport facility in the fall. Future Pipe conducts business all over the world and its presence on the Mississippi Coast will be missed.
- Day & Zimmermann, ranked one of the largest private companies in America by *Forbes*, recently purchased Industrial Maintenance and Machine's plant in Moss Point, and has plans to grow staffing levels<sup>5</sup> from 30 current positions to 300.

## The Economy (continued)

Table: Membership levels in the Gulf Coast Chapter of the Mississippi Hospitality & Restaurant Association

Year	Members	% of 2005
2005 (est)	350	100%
2006 (est)	95	27%
2007	180	51%
2008	246	70%

### Coast economy at a glance

- Trinity Yachts and Gulf Ship each now employ more than 1,000 people.
- Gross casino revenues in 2008 are on pace to exceed pre-Katrina levels for the second year in a row.
- Super Wal-Mart in Pass Christian is expected to break ground in late 2008.
- Stennis Space Center has added 714 employees to its overall tally since Katrina.
- The General Fund for the City of D'Iberville has grown from \$7,400 at one point in 2004 to over \$7 million at the end of 2007.
- The awarding-winning Shed BBQ (Jackson Co) had \$2.5 million in sales in 2007, and opened its first franchise in 2008 (Harrison Co).
- Overall airline passenger traffic at Gulfport-Biloxi Int'l Airport is up over both 2007 and 2004-2005.

- Membership levels in organizations like the Chambers of Commerce and the Mississippi Hospitality & Restaurant Association (MHRA) have rebounded dramatically after seeing levels plummet after Hurricane Katrina. Jackson and Hancock Counties have actually seen increases in overall membership, while Harrison County, which had its main offices (and its records) destroyed in the storm, has grown its membership by almost 20% over the past two years. Reference the table to the left for MHRA recovery.
- Prime Outlets in Gulfport, which lost 85% of its roof in Katrina, completed significant renovations and experienced notable gains in traffic, added eleven stores, expanded four existing stores, and won the 2007 Governor's Cup Award for its contribution to economic growth on the Mississippi Coast.
- Recent press surrounding the Northrop Grumman/EADS pursuit of a \$35-40 billion KC-45 Tanker project with the U.S. Air Force has highlighted the Mississippi Gulf Coast as the centerpiece of a growing "Aerospace Corridor" that runs along Interstate 10 from southeast Louisiana to northwest Florida. If awarded, the tanker project may generate as many as 10,000 jobs in 10 years, with many of those opportunities being brought to the Mississippi Coast. For example, as many as 300 suppliers would be impacted by the contract, many of which likely would relocate to the Mississippi Coast. Read more about similar projects in the "Military and Stennis" section of this report.
- Gulf LNG Terminal started construction in Pascagoula in late 2007. The total project cost is estimated to be over \$1 billion and will generate as many as 1,500 construction and 200 permanent jobs at the Port of Pascagoula. Liquid natural gas is a clean burning fossil fuel and the overall industry is expected to grow by more than 40% in the next 20 years<sup>6</sup>.
- The *Journal of South Mississippi Business* reported in late 2007 that the cost of living on the Mississippi Coast had risen since the storm; much of this increase was related to insurance. Of note is that since 2006 commercial wind pool rates have come down by as much as 30%, and in the future there will likely be additional downward pressures on price as new competition (supply) is attracted to the Mississippi market.

# Housing

**The Gulf Coast Renaissance Corporation**

This group focuses its efforts in the three coastal counties (Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson) and offers programs such as REACH, which assists employers in establishing Employer Assisted Housing (EAH) programs. Under REACH, employees making less than 120% of area median income may qualify for matching funds that go towards the purchase of a home or rental assistance.

Renaissance also has other programs, such as an affordable housing development fund and the Renaissance Builder & Developer Guild, which will foster the redevelopment of communities in environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable ways.

**Housing Working Group**

In August 2008 the Gulf Coast Business Council organized a group of leaders from the Mississippi Coast to suggest mid-course modifications to the State's housing programs for Coast recovery.

The recommendations were presented to Governor Barbour on August 13.

- There are many estimates of what impact Hurricane Katrina had on the housing stocks of South Mississippi, but most would agree that between 78,000 and 94,000 homes and residences received significant damage or were destroyed.
- At the highest point there were over approximately 31,000 FEMA trailers and mobile homes in service in the three Coastal Counties<sup>7</sup>. As of August 2008, it was reported that there were still 3,000 in service<sup>8</sup>, or that 90% of the once active FEMA trailers on the Mississippi Gulf Coast have been deactivated.
- Affordable housing and affordable rental housing remain as challenges. Some sources estimate that the Mississippi Coast still lacks as many as 6,000 affordable rental units. On the home ownership front, high insurance rates have contributed to a growing inventory of homes for sale that is not moving, many of which are valued at under \$185,000<sup>9</sup>. Outside of insurance, developers interested in building workforce housing report that bureaucracy, availability of affordable land, and financing also have been inhibitors.
- Insurance remains a major problem for homeowners, but some progress has been made. Homeowners who build to certain specifications are eligible for substantial discounts and Mississippi Insurance Commissioner Mike Chaney is working with major insurance companies to broker similar policies<sup>10</sup>.
- State Farm is not renewing policies within 1,000 feet of the Coast and excluding wind coverage from homeowner policies within 2,500 feet beginning November 1, 2008.
- Congressman Gene Taylor has introduced an "all perils" insurance legislation in the House. Including windstorm coverage in National Flood Insurance Program is one of Taylor's goals. On the private side, national insurance carrier Nationwide lobbied Congress in 2008 to package wind and flood into one product. Other private insurers are proposing interstate coastal risk pools for wind.
- W.S. Loper & Associates 2008 apartment survey for the three coastal counties, conducted in April 2008, found there were 1,344 market rent and 2,210 assisted rental housing units under construction (these numbers are not reflected in table to the left, which is a summary of the apartment study for Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties).

Table: 2008 Gulf Coast Market Rent Apartment Survey

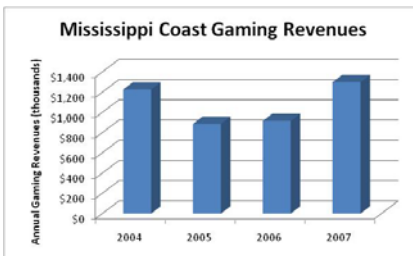
	Supply	Vacancy Rate
October 2004	16,977	9.3%
March 2007	13,594	6.7%
April 2008	14,556	6.5%

Source: Gulf Regional Planning Commission

## Tourism

Table: Total Hotel Rooms MS Gulf Coast

	Total Rooms	Casino	Non-casino
Pre-Katrina	17,544	5,465	12,079
Nov 2005	3,400	0	3,400
Summer 2008	12,393	3,772	8,621



### Ten Great Tourist Activities We Still Enjoy

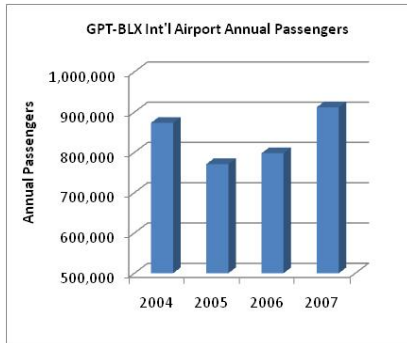
1. Peter Anderson Festival – Annual art event attracts more than 100,000 visitors to Ocean Springs.
2. Mardi Gras
3. Gulf Islands National Seashore
4. Biloxi and Pass Christian Seafood Festivals
5. Crab Fest in Bay St. Louis draws 50,000 visitors annually.
6. Sounds by the Sea held in Harrison and Jackson Counties over July 4<sup>th</sup>.
7. Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo (2008 doubled 2007 attendance)
8. Cruisin’ the Coast – spans the entire Coast each October and attracts thousands of classic car enthusiasts from around the globe.
9. Stennis Space Center has a great existing museum and Infinity on the way
10. Audubon Center in Moss Point incorporates eco-tourism with the Pascagoula River

- In the initial months following Hurricane Katrina, more than 80% of the Mississippi Coast’s available hotel supply had been either destroyed or taken off of the market. As of summer 2008, supply levels are at about 70% of where they were before the storm.
- Hurricane Katrina completely destroyed several gaming properties and shut down the entire industry for three months. At stake were over 15,000 directly related jobs and thousands of other jobs that depended on the Coast’s tourism industry. In December 2005 three properties (there had been twelve) opened temporary facilities. In 2008 there were eleven properties up and running (including three new names) and in 2007 those properties combined to report over \$1.3 billion in total gaming revenues, exceeding the previous record (2004) of \$1.2 billion. Slot machines and table positions on the Mississippi Coast are about 85% of pre-Katrina levels<sup>11</sup>.
- Since the storm, the Mississippi Coast has gained two championship golf courses, *The Preserve* by Jerry Pate and *Fallen Oak* by Tom Fazio, bringing the total number of courses on the Coast to 22, as compared to 22 before Katrina. The Mississippi “Golf Coast” golf-tourism organization reports that Golf Tourism is up 63% in 2007-08 compared to prior year. Golf tourism involves at least one hotel room night and round of golf. Two courses, *Fallen Oak* and *Grand Bear*, were named to *Golf Magazine’s* Top 100 for 2008-09<sup>12</sup>.
- In 2008 the Harrison County Board of Supervisors approved a Sand Beach Master Plan that is designed to guide beautification, redevelopment, and growth along the 26 miles of sand beach in Harrison County over the next 20 years<sup>13</sup>.
- The Mississippi Coast Coliseum & Convention Center, located on Beach Boulevard in Biloxi, currently offers 180,000 of renovated and newly decorated convention space. In October 2009 the facility will offer 375,000 square feet of convention and meeting space after completing a \$68 million expansion project.
- Buccaneer State Park in Hancock County, once Mississippi’s largest grossing state park, was brought into the spotlight in 2008 when members of the Senate Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Committee recommended an \$18 million state bond issue. This matter has not yet been resolved, but should be monitored.

## Ports and Airports

Table: Port of Gulfport  
 Direct and indirect maritime jobs

Year	Related Jobs
2005	3,200
2007	2,000
Potential	5,400



### Milestone at GPT-BLX Int'l Airport

- USO Lounge - Open
- Hilton Garden Inn - Open
- Marriott Residence Inn - Open
- Rental Car Service Center - Complete
- Preferred Traveler Program - Beginning Fall 2008
- Air Cargo Facility - August Completion
- Parking Garage - November Completion
- FBO - Contracts awarded to Million Air and Atlantic Aviation, 2009 Completion
- Reflections Office Park - 2009 Completion
- New Tower - Construction to begin 2010

- To date, the State Port at Gulfport has rebuilt 400,000 square feet of warehouse space after losing over 700,000 square feet of space to Katrina. The Port's entire rail system was destroyed and seven out of ten berths were demolished. Four are currently operational. Frozen cargo exports have been shut off completely until freezer facilities are replaced. Nonetheless, the State Port remains the third busiest container port in the Gulf of Mexico and the 17<sup>th</sup> busiest in the United States. The Port's infrastructure should soon be brought back to par, however, as \$600 million in CDBG funds has been allocated for a restoration and expansion project.
- The Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport has been instrumental in the recovery efforts that have taken place on the Mississippi Coast, and also has fared well in the midst of skyrocketing fuel costs that have hurt so many other airports. Recently it completed a \$50 million, 73,000 sq. ft. terminal expansion and increased capacity to seven gates. A new parking garage will be in service in November 2008. Across the street a new Hilton Garden Inn and a Marriott Residence have opened, while 100,000 sq ft of new office park space will be in service in 2009. In 2007 the airport began to exceed pre-Katrina passenger counts and that trend has continued into 2008.
- The Port of Pascagoula, the 22<sup>nd</sup> ranked port in overall trade in the United States<sup>14</sup>, has several initiatives underway, including deepening its river harbor and expanding its entrance, as well as building a new freeze blast facility, used primarily for the exporting of poultry.
- The Stennis International Airport, part of the Hancock County Port and Harbor Commission, will likely proceed with a \$7 million renovation which will include improvements to its hangars and new office/warehouse buildings.
- Gulf Coast International Cargo expects to move into a new \$40 million facility at the Gulfport-Biloxi international Airport by the end of August 2008, with an emphasis in exports to South America<sup>15</sup>.
- PSL North America opened its pipe manufacturing plant at the Port Bienville Industrial Park in Hancock County in 2008.



## Transportation and Infrastructure

### Senate Bill 2007

On July 3, 2008, the Mississippi Legislature passed Senate Bill 2007 which grants expedited purchase authority to county utility authorities. In other words, the five county utility authorities in South Mississippi will be able to quickly acquire necessary rights of way easements to lay water and sewer lines. Ultimately, it is hoped that this measure will allow for \$640 million in CDBG funding to be used for up to 67 water and sewer projects in five lower counties of South Mississippi. This infrastructure is vital to the growth of the Mississippi Coast.

### City updates

- Bay St. Louis – At least \$30 million has been allocated to rebuilding the seawall.
- Biloxi – Investing \$335 million in city infrastructure.
- D'Iberville – Implemented new software to manage water utilities.
- Gautier – City Hall being renovated.
- Gulfport – More than 80 downtown buildings have won façade grants.
- Long Beach – To spend \$6.7 million to rebuild Jeff Davis Avenue.
- Moss Point – Planning for 40% of projects in city's Downtown Development plan is complete.
- Ocean Springs – City Council accepted plans for use of Mississippi Cottages in mixed use project.
- Pass Christian – Rebuilding City Hall and library.
- Pascagoula – Four road projects are in the pipeline.
- Waveland – Various water and sewer projects underway.

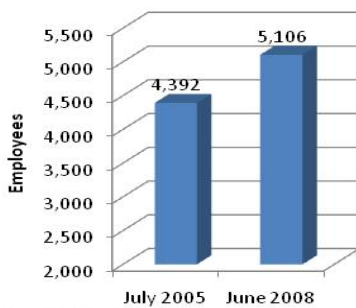
- Since the storm MDOT has initiated 94 projects costing more than \$900 million. The two bridges account for approximately \$660 million of that total. Below are a few specific examples of the work that has been completed or is in progress.
  - Highway 90 from Biloxi to Pass Christian set for December 2008 completion. The project costs \$100 million.
  - Highway 67 from Interstate 10 at Interstate 110 to Highway 605 and all the way to Highway 49.
  - Highway 605 – Lorraine Road up to Highway 67. Development at the end of this road includes the new St. Patrick High School, William Carey University, and Tradition.
- Final plans for Beach Boulevard in Pascagoula have been submitted to MDOT.
- Highway 603 widening in Hancock County is on hold<sup>16</sup>. This is reportedly due to rising road construction material costs and skyrocketing fuel costs.
- CTA ridership is up 9.5% from Pre-Katrina and 35% since 2007<sup>17</sup>. Several new programs will be rolled out in coming months, and Beachcomber Trolleys will return in summer of 2009.
- In July 2008 a \$1.7 million dredging project began in Gulfport's Small Craft Harbor. Estimated time of completion is December 2008. This should help the Charter Boat Association for the Coast, which reports that overall membership is at 55 compared to over 100 before Katrina<sup>18</sup>.
- The U.S. Coast Guard has cleared more than 387,000 cubic yards of marine debris from coastal waters in Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties since 2006. Marsh areas north of Bay St. Louis currently are being cleaned<sup>19</sup>.
- Stennis Space Center reports that it has completed 28 out of 33 repair projects.

## Military and Stennis

### The \$40 billion tanker project

In February 2008 the Air Force selected Northrop Grumman/EADS to build 179 refueling planes. Over the course of the project, which would be based in Mobile, thousands of jobs will be needed and up to 300 suppliers would be impacted, many of which might operate from the Mississippi Coast. The bidding process is currently underway again after Boeing appealed the selection process.

Stennis Space Center Employees



Source: John C. Stennis Space Center

### The Aerospace Corridor

Within a 300 mile area and along Interstate 10, Stennis Space Center (Hancock County), Eglin Air Force Base (Florida), Brookely Industrial Complex (Mobile), NASA Michoud facility (New Orleans), and Northrop Grumman in Pascagoula are all considered part of a growing aerospace corridor.

- Some of the most significant steps since the storm have been taken by the Coast's military installments. In fact, the largest military construction program in the Air Force is occurring in Biloxi at Keesler Air Force Base, where \$950 million in projects are underway. Below are just a few examples of what has occurred at Keesler since the storm.
  - The largest military housing project in Air Force history – 1,028 new housing units at a cost of \$287.4 million.
  - Rebuilding the Medical Center at \$172.6 million and building a state-of-the-art family birthing center. The Medical Center cared for over 27,000 patients during the rebuilding period.
  - New training facility increased student capacity by 600.
- The Naval Construction Battalion Center (SEABEE base Gulfport) reports that over 24 projects valued at \$320 million have been awarded and are under construction. The SEABEE's have 212 housing units on base under construction, 60 units off base, 24 units being procured near Stennis, and 106 units planned for FY 2010. The base has seen increases in assignments that includes a new battalion and a new regiment totaling up to 720 military and their families, as well as new investments in training and logistics programs.
- Estimated economic impact within 50 miles of Stennis is \$700 million annually. NASA Shared Services Center has hired over 500 staff since the storm and recently moved into its new \$30 million building. Companies and organizations that are located on the Stennis campus include the U.S. Navy, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, Rolls Royce, Pratt Whitney, and the U.S. Government Printing Office. Stennis also houses the Mississippi Enterprise for Technology.
- Mississippi Enterprise for Technology reports 20 tenant companies in its geospatial technology industry cluster at Stennis Space Center, half of which are developing in its business incubator. These businesses have had a substantial impact in the Katrina recovery process. Among the contributions: technical model building for evaluation and forecasting, missing person assistance, satellite imagery, and mapping/GIS services.

# Education

Mississippi Coast School Enrollments  
 Source: Mississippi Department of Education website

	Fall 2004	Fall 2007
<b>Colleges</b>		
MGCCC	10,430	8,859
USM Gulf Coast	2,578	2,473
Tulane Biloxi Campus	175	142
William Carey	743	612
<b>Public Schools</b>		
HANCOCK CO SCHOOL DIST	4,324	4,300
BAY ST LOUIS WAVELAND SCHOOL DIST	2,383	1,679
HARRISON CO SCHOOL DIST	13,170	13,083
BILOXI PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	6,305	4,878
GULFPORT SCHOOL DIST	6,291	5,581
LONG BEACH SCHOOL DIST	3,272	2,746
PASS CHRISTIAN PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	1,980	1,471
JACKSON CO SCHOOL DIST	8,431	8,923
MOSS POINT SEPARATE SCHOOL DIST	3,862	3,124
OCEAN SPRINGS SCHOOL DIST	5,418	5,222
PASCAGOULA SCHOOL DIST	7,559	7,130
<b>Total Public Schools</b>	<b>62,995</b>	<b>58,137</b>

### Preparing Students for Careers

In 2008 a group of local business leaders and educators from the Mississippi Coast visited West Florida High School of Advanced Technology (WFHS) in Pensacola, Florida. WFHS offers more than fifteen career programs and academies that provide an Advanced Career Experience (ACE) with a challenging and project-driven curriculum. The results in Florida have been encouraging, with low dropout rates and a trained workforce. Similar concepts are being explored for South Mississippi.

- Despite losing 25% of its enrollment in 2005 and sustaining more than \$21 million in damages, in 2008 MGCCC was again ranked in the top 100 Community Colleges in the country and continues to be the nation’s number one producer of associate degrees for education majors<sup>20</sup>.
- MGCCC will soon begin construction on a \$12 million hospitality and resort center at their Jeff Davis campus in Gulfport<sup>21</sup>. Credit programs such as Hospitality and Tourism Management will be offered, as will work-force training and continuing education – all needed to accommodate the Mississippi Coast’s continually growing tourism industry. In March 2008 MGCCC opened its Estuarine Center in Gautier<sup>22</sup>.
- A planning team has been assembled to develop a master plan for the Cross Creek campus of the University of Southern Mississippi just north of I-10 in Harrison County. Cross Creek will reside on 200 acres and have unparalleled access to the major traffic routes of South Mississippi. The Gulf Park campus, located in Long Beach and largely impacted by Katrina, would remain a vital and important campus in the USM system.
- Enrollment in USM’s summer session set a new record, and preliminary estimates are that fall 2008 will bring the Coast campus to levels not seen since Katrina. Tulane University’s School of Continuing Studies in Biloxi also reported progress for spring of 2008 and was optimistic about fall 2008.
- Construction is underway on the new Gulf Coast campus of William Carey University, with a scheduled open date of August 2009. There will be 750 students initially, with plans for 3,000 in following years. Within a mile of William Carey is St. Patrick Catholic High School, which opened in 2007 with over 600 students.
- Gulfport High School is planning a \$4 million Culinary Arts Center. West Harrison High School and D’Iberville High Schools in Harrison County are under construction – West Harrison will be a new school. A \$22 million K-8 school is underway in Pass Christian. The facility will be located next to the \$5 million Boys & Girls Club, which is also under construction.

## Healthcare

### Mental Health on the Gulf Coast

While overall recovery efforts on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and in New Orleans have been significant, one must remember that the storm did more than just physical damage to the region.

- Post-Katrina Storm Disorder (PKSD) is being used by many local clinicians to describe sub threshold stress-related cases that do not meet full Post Traumatic Stress Disorder criteria. Among the people most affected by this are those that continue to grieve what was lost and might not return and those who feel that they have not benefited from the post-Katrina recovery.
- According to a study of 92 different Katrina FEMA parks, suicide rates in Louisiana's and Mississippi's parks were 79 times higher than the national rate, while depression was 7 times higher.
- A study released in August 2007 suggested that mental illness was double that of pre-storm levels and that posttraumatic stress disorder increased in 2007 relative to 2006.

All statistics above taken from "Post-Katrina storm Disorder and Recovery in Mississippi More than 2 years Later", Raymond Scurfield, *Traumatology*, June 2008, vol 14, pp 88-106

- In 2007 it's estimated that Singing River Hospital System contributed \$290 million into Jackson County's economy. Total patient days and admissions were 92,385 and 16,799, respectively, compared to 90,395 and 16,520 in 2005<sup>23</sup>.
- Memorial Hospital reports 1,484 hires since Katrina, including recruiting and employing 24 new physicians. Recently certified as a Primary Stroke Center, the first in Mississippi, and invested over \$27 million in capital equipment and construction. As of summer 2008, Memorial Hospital reported a staff of 2,795 compared to 2,464 pre-Katrina while its medical staff consists of 277 members compared to 284 in 2005<sup>24</sup>.
- In 2008 the Second Annual Gulf Coast Mental Health Summit was sponsored by the Interfaith Disaster Task Force. In the summit issues like Post-Katrina Storm Disorder and depression were discussed.
- The University of Pennsylvania sent 32 student volunteers down in 2008 and embarked upon their "Penn in the Gulf" initiative, which in part will focus on needs in Hancock County that have not been met, with a focus on mental health issues<sup>25</sup>.
- E Fitness & Wellness opened up in Biloxi in the fall of 2007. E Fitness is the flagship project of the Mississippi Wellness Foundation. The 140,000 square feet health club offers state-of-the-art equipment and promotes healthy lifestyles through several programs.
- In May 2008 the City of Gulfport approved a city-wide smoking ban but excludes casinos and bars.
- Hancock Medical Center received a \$62,000 grant from the Lion's Club International to purchase a new pulmonary function machine in 2008. Hancock also received \$100,000 for its imaging suite in Diamondhead in 2007.
- In a study performed by the Columbia Mailman School of Public Health it is pointed out that the reincorporation of community and social activities greatly aids in the psychological recovery an individual through the development of "security and resumption of social roles, social practices, and social institutions providing a therapeutic effect."<sup>26</sup>

## Quality of Life

### Infinity

This \$40 million project at NASA Stennis space Center should break ground in 2009 and has the potential to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors annually.

### Center for Marine Education and Research

Set to open in Gulfport Fall 2008, this will be a world-class marine mammal research facility that will partner with several Universities to address both environmental and marine life issues.

### Audubon Center

Located in Moss Point, the Audubon Center has plans for expansion and is paving the way for eco-tourism on the Pascagoula River and the Mississippi Coast.

### Baseball and Recovery

- St. John (now St. Patrick) won the 1A state title in 2007.
- In July 2008 Bay St. Louis welcomed 14 teams from four states to the Cal Ripken Southwest Regional Baseball Tournament.
- D' Iberville opens new baseball complex and Long Beach announces one on way
- Pascagoula hosted 2008 Dixie Youth O-Zone World Series.
- Waveland will get new ball fields with part of \$200 in CDBG awarded to Hancock County.

- Ocean Spring was listed in the publication "The 50 Best Small Southern Towns"<sup>27</sup>
- Bay St. Louis will hold its inaugural "New Day in the Bay" event on August 30, 2008. Since the Bay St. Louis Bridge opened in 2007, Bay St. Louis and Pass Christian have partnered for Bridgefest. Both the Bay St. Louis Bridge and the Ocean Springs-Biloxi Bridge have walking paths that are used by hundreds of Coastians on a daily basis.
- Tradition, a new development off of Highway 67, announced plans to become a "carbon-neutral" community, expanding its "green-friendly" building and design practices. The Village at Tradition, a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) is modeled after New Urbanism principles.
- KaBOOM and its Operation Playground have built 41 playgrounds in Mississippi since December 2005. The overall effort, from Houston to Mobile, has built 100 playgrounds using 22,000 volunteers and more than \$8 million.
- The \$30 million, 25,000 sq. ft. Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art, designed by world-renowned architect Frank Gehry, and the Maritime Seafood Industry Museum are both scheduled to open in Biloxi in 2009.
- Pass Christian, Bay-Waveland, Pascagoula, Ocean Springs, Gulfport, and Biloxi have all completed Yacht Club renovations or announced final plans.
- The first annual Pride of Long Beach Anniversary Fest was held in August 2008.
- The Gulf Coast Heritage Trail Partnership in Jackson County is an effort to map existing and proposed bikeways, blueways, and walking trails in Jackson County.
- The building that houses the United Way of South Mississippi, the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, the Coast Chamber of Commerce Foundation, and the Gulf Coast Business Council Research Foundation was officially named the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation Nonprofit Center. With more than 300 nonprofit organizations on the Mississippi Coast, the Knight Foundation Nonprofit Center will serve as a world-class meeting center that will house at least 22 nonprofit agencies.

## General Recovery

### **“Volunteers saved the Mississippi Coast, and are still saving it.”**

– Current headline on USM’s Katrina Research Center’s website. Below one will find a sample – the tip of the iceberg – of what’s been done since the storm.

- United Way of South Mississippi has provided leadership for mobilizing resources in South Mississippi. From July 2005 to August 2008, almost \$6 million has been administered to more than 40 local organizations that provide over 70 programs in the areas of affordable housing, child and youth development, and mental health.
  - Gulf Coast Conservation Corps 51 Americorp members generated 24,850 hours of community service, or 8.5 years of consecutive 8 hour days.
  - Habitat for Humanity in Hancock County has put 80 houses in the ground, has a 16 unit senior townhome under construction, and 97 more single family homes in the pipeline.
  - Help from groups that are not from the Mississippi Coast has been paramount to the Coast’s recovery. South Mississippi can be especially thankful for the term “volunteerism”.
- A spring 2008 survey of 500 Biloxians showed that 80% thought that the City was on the right track to recovery<sup>28</sup>. In New Orleans a similar survey found that 60% of its residents saw “at least some progress” in the recovery of New Orleans.<sup>29</sup>
  - Approximately 2,800 Mississippi families have moved from FEMA temporary housing to a Mississippi Cottage. As recently as July 2008, there were as many as 325 families still housed in hotels<sup>30</sup>.
  - In July 2008 FEMA awarded an additional \$19 million for recovery projects in Hancock and Harrison Counties. Among the projects that will be undertaken are moving public schools out of flood prone areas, building shelters for future disasters, and repairing public buildings<sup>31</sup>.
  - More than \$2.8 billion has been obligated in various Public Assistance (PA) categories<sup>32</sup>:
    - More than \$710 million obligated for land-based debris removal; more than \$900 million in Direct Federal Assistance funds were obligated to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the land-based debris removal mission. To date, more than 46 million cubic yards of debris has been removed – that’s equal to a football field stacked approximately 4.9 miles high.
    - \$815 million to repair public utilities; \$594 million to repair or replace public buildings; \$375 million for emergency protective measures; \$62 million to repair roads and bridges; \$1.3 million to repair water control devices such as ditches and irrigation channels; \$134 million to repair and restore public recreational facilities such as state parks; \$129 million to meet the costs of administering the PA grant
  - Since the storm 216,555 families and individuals in Mississippi have been approved for Housing Assistance totaling more than \$876 million. Over 134,000 Mississippians have been approved for Other Needs Assistance.<sup>33</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> U.S. Census and ESRI
  - <sup>2</sup> Sept 2005 MDES Labor Reports
  - <sup>3</sup> ESRI Population estimates
  - <sup>4</sup> Mississippi Tax Commission FY 2007 Report and unaudited FY 2008 results
  - <sup>5</sup> *Sun Herald*, August 13, 2008
  - <sup>6</sup> Energy Information Administration, Gulf LNG Clean Energy Project
  - <sup>7</sup> Governor's Office of Recovery and Renewal
  - <sup>8</sup> Governor's Office of Recovery and Renewal
  - <sup>9</sup> *Sun Herald*, August 10, 2008
  - <sup>10</sup> *Sun Herald*, August 7, 2008
  - <sup>11</sup> Mississippi Gaming Commission
  - <sup>12</sup> *Mississippi Business Journal*, August 8, 2008
  - <sup>13</sup> Harrison County Comprehensive Plan,  
<http://www.planharrisoncounty.org/>
  - <sup>14</sup> *Journal of South Mississippi Business*, August 2008
  - <sup>15</sup> *Sun Herald*, August 1, 2008
  - <sup>16</sup> *Sun Herald*, June 17, 2008
  - <sup>17</sup> Harrison County Council of Governments, May 14, 2008
  - <sup>18</sup> *Sun Herald*, August 10, 2008
  - <sup>19</sup> MEMA – MS1604-08-664, July 30, 2008
  - <sup>20</sup> MGCCC Press Release, August 4, 2008
  - <sup>21</sup> *Sun Herald*, July 21, 2008
  - <sup>22</sup> *The Mississippi Press*, March 30, 2008
  - <sup>23</sup> *The Mississippi Press*, July 17, 2008
  - <sup>24</sup> Memorial Hospital Foundation, August 2008
  - <sup>25</sup> *Sun Herald*, January 1, 2008
  - <sup>26</sup> Restoration Point Foundation, RestPoint News July 2008 Volume 1, Issue 2
  - <sup>27</sup> *Journal of South Mississippi Business*, February 2008
  - <sup>28</sup> City of Biloxi website
  - <sup>29</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation survey, *Sun Herald*, August 10, 2008
  - <sup>30</sup> MEMA – MS1604-08-664, July 30, 2008
  - <sup>31</sup> *Sun Herald*, July 26, 2008
  - <sup>32</sup> MEMA – MS1604-08-664, July 30, 2008
  - <sup>33</sup> MEMA – MS1604-08-664, July 30, 2008