We're more than a river.”

Mississippi -- the name itself is Choctaw. It means "father of waters" and refers to the largest river in North America, which forms Mississippi's western border. The State of Mississippi measures 450 miles north to south and 180 miles east to west. Mississippi contains 47,716 square miles of valleys and hills, growing cities, small towns, expansive forests, rolling prairies, creeks, rivers, lakes and some of the finest farmland in the world.

The state's population is 2,844,658 with a minority population making up 36 percent of the total. In 2000 there were 53,509 businesses with employees, of which approximately 97 percent were small businesses (less than 500 employees). The number of small businesses with employees increased by 1.2 percent from 51,500 in 1999. There were 106,215 self-employed persons in 2000. While there is some overlap between these two groups (firms with employees and self-employed persons), a rough calculation puts the total number of businesses at 159,724. The composition of small businesses in Mississippi is very diverse. The Manufacturing industry is the largest small business employer in Mississippi.

Other significant small businesses are Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, and accommodations with Food Services. The recent addition of the Gaming Industry has brought significant change to several areas of the state. Tunica County in north Mississippi, once the poorest county in the nation, is now a thriving area.

The Mississippi Gulf Coast has also benefitted from the Gaming Industry, as well as several locations along the Mississippi River such as Natchez and Vicksburg.

The northwestern area of the state, known as the Mississippi Delta, is prime farm land for cotton, soybeans and catfish farming. Because of the Delta, Mississippi is the number one catfish producer in the nation. The southern area of the state is largely made up of pine forest, while the northeastern area is largely hardwood forest in hilly terrain.

So unpack and enjoy the city. As you travel throughout Jackson, you will experience our famous "Southern Hospitality."
The campus of Jackson State University will be a virtual global village as the International Visitors Center of Jackson a part the Division will sponsor the 14th Annual International Festival on April 4-9, 2005 at Jackson State University. The purpose of the festival is to highlight the variety of cultures present at the university and give children and adults in Jackson the opportunity to travel the world, if only for one day.

The Events will include:

- an international festival with music, food, exhibits representing the seven continents and a children’s village;
- a symposium focusing on current global issues; and
- a scholarship banquet which provides funds for international student scholarships and study abroad opportunities for American students.

Students from various schools throughout the city of Jackson and surrounding school districts will attend the festival. A crowd of approximately 500 people will be present at the scholarship banquet to hear Her Excellency Dr. Inonge Mbikusita-Lweanika, Ambassar to the United States from the Republic of Zambia. A trip for two to an exotic South American city will be raffled at the banquet, compliments of Super Travel and Tours.

For more information, please contact Kathy Sims at 601/979-3794 or ksims@jsums.edu or Shirley Harrison at 601/979-2043 or sharivcj@aol.com

"Membership Has Its Privileges"

Our 2005 membership drive is underway and we want you! As we move into the new millennium, IVCJ is working to increase the impact of international exchanges and opportunities for our friends and supporters. That is why we are offering you the opportunity to become an IVCJ Diplomat!

As a Diplomat, you will have priority status for meeting prestigious international visitors and hosting them in your home. You will also receive updates of visitors' arrivals and program interests. Also as a member, you will receive:

- IVCJ quarterly newsletters,
- invitations to special events and activities,
- an IVCJ t-shirt,
- ticket discounts for functions,
- access to resource library and NCIV network affiliates.

We invite you to take this special opportunity to join our circle of forward-looking friends across the state. Your tax-deductible membership fee will be an investment in the internationalization of Mississippi.

Please call our office for more information about membership fees and other details at 601/979-2043.

NAME & ADDRESS:

__________________________________________________________________________

ORGANIZATION (if applicable):

__________________________________________________________________________

TELEPHONE: (h) ________________________ (w) __________

ANNUAL DUES:

☐ Student $10
☐ Individual $25
☐ Family $40

☐ Organization:

Bronze Level $100
Silver Level $250
Gold Level $500
Platinum Level $1000

☐ I would not like to become a member at this time, but enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of $______________.

Please send this form along with your check to: IVCJ, PO Box 17103, Jackson, MS 39217

- an IVCJ portfolio,
February 16-18
Kyrgyz Republic

February 19-23
Brazil

February 15-19
Japan

February 24-March 1
Algeria, Gaza, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates

February 26- March 2
Nepal, Pakistan, India

February 27-March 2
Bangladesh, Columbia, Haiti, India, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Turkey, Rwanda, West Bank, Zimbabwe

March 9-12
Czech Republic, Egypt, Germany, India, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mexico, Nigeria, Oman, Peru, Qatar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda

March 27-31
American Studies
Near East and North Africa

May 19-25
Foreign Policy and Human Rights
Need a worthy way to spend your free time?!

We are seeking volunteers to assist with our programs. You can volunteer in one of the following areas. Call us today at 968-2043!

Program Assistant
- Work with the program officer to complete international visitors’ itineraries.
- Duties to include: making appointment calls to local resources, typing itineraries and other correspondences, and sending faxes and other correspondences to local resources.

Office Assistant
- Provide general office assistance including: answering telephones; copying; faxing; picking up mail from campus offices; filing; updating database; assisting with special projects, such as mailouts and the International Festival.

Home Host
- Provide an evening of hospitality for international visitors.
- Provide overnight accommodations for international visitors.

Local Guide
- Accompany international visitors to professional appointments and/or cultural activities.
- Drive/accompany international visitors in personal vehicle to professional appointments and/or cultural activities.
**Washington Conference**

International Visitors Center of Jackson President, Dr. Ally Mack and Executive Director, Shirley Harrison will attend the NCIV Conference in Washington, DC on March 14-16, 2002. The conference theme is “Citizen Diplomacy and U. S. Foreign Policy: Building Global Partnerships.”

Various sessions focusing on International Crime, Fiscal Management, Conflict Resolution, and IEMS will highlight the conference. Conference-goers can also visit Capitol Hill and the US Department of State to promote the International Visitors Program among congressional representatives and local programming agencies.

**New Staff**

The International Visitors Center of Jackson welcomes Ms. Jacqueline Patton-Johnson as Program Officer.

Jacqueline is a graduate of Jackson State University with a bachelor of science degree in Political Science and a masters degree in Business Education from Mississippi College. She is a native of Gulfport and joins IVCJ from Maximus/Mississippi Child Support and the Mississippi Department of Human Services as Supervisor and Case Worker.

**Thank You Community Partners**

The Office of International Programs, International Visitors Center of Jackson and Mississippi Consortium for International Development celebrated its Seventh Annual Community Partners Reception.

The Annual Community Partners Reception is our way of saying "thank you" to community members who make the programming that IVCJ provides for its international visitors so successful.

Community volunteers, including business contacts, home hosts and other community leaders, receive special commendations with a surprise gift, great food and musical entertainment throughout the evening.

**Habitat Blitz**

Jackson State University and Entergy, in conjunction with the annual International Festival helped construct a Habitat for Humanity home.

The house, a model of energy efficiency, was completed with the help of 300 volunteers. This energy efficient model home was one of more than 200 Habitat homes built under the ‘sweat equity’ concept, in metropolitan Jackson since 1986.

The 1,100 square foot home is known as a “blitz build” project because it was completed in seven days.

Among those pouring their energy into construction were Entergy personnel, JSU President Ronald Mason, his wife Belinda, and a strong supporting cast of students, faculty and staff.

The Habitat volunteers project will again be a part of International Festival 2002. For additional information or if you wish to volunteer, contact Shirley Harrison at 601/979-2043 or sharivcj@aol.com
“Global Connections” is a quarterly newsletter published by the International Visitors Center of Jackson. For more information about our programs, contact:

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Ally Mack, President
Shirley Harrison, Executive Director
Jacqueline Patton-Johnson
Program Officer

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