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## ***Tunica Casinos Open for Business***

### ***North Mississippi resort housing evacuees, sending aid to Gulf Coast***

TUNICA RESORTS, Mississippi (September 8, 2005) — The phones have been ringing here in the South's Casino Capital with thousands of customers calling to make sure Tunica is operating and was not damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

As the hurricane approached the Mississippi Gulf Coast, many vacationers moved to Tunica, the state's other major gaming resort. Located just 30 minutes south of Memphis, Tunica's resort industry was spared the hurricane's wrath and is now inviting and welcoming the Gulf Coast's traditional visitors to vacation getaways here.

Tunica's nine casino resorts mirror the size and employee base of the pre-hurricane Gulf Coast casino industry. Many of the resort employees in Tunica and the Gulf Coast had worked at both destinations and many friendships were forged. Hundreds of Tunica's 15,000 resort employees are now housing and providing support to their Gulf Coast friends. In addition, many large public places such as the Tunica Recreation Center and the Grand Casino Convention Center are also housing evacuees. Fundraising efforts are also in full swing in Tunica to send cash and supplies to the devastated Gulf Coast area.

"It will be months to perhaps even years before the Gulf Coast is able to welcome visitors to new or restored casino resorts," Webster Franklin, President and CEO of the Tunica Convention and Visitors Bureau, said. "We wish them a speedy recovery and look forward to many brighter days ahead."

Both the Gulf Coast and Tunica are key generators of gaming, sales and employee income taxes for the state of Mississippi, together providing more than 15 percent of the state's total tax receipts. Gov. Haley Barbour has said one way to help Mississippi, in addition to sending supplies and funds, is to keep visiting the state.

Tunica is often referred to as the "Tunica Miracle" as it is the fastest growing American resort destination of the last decade. Tunica offers 6,300 hotel rooms, big-name entertainment and dozens of restaurants as well as three championship golf courses. The architecturally stunning Tunica

RiverPark was recently named the Southeast U.S.'s "Travel Attraction of the Year." For travel information, visit Tunica's website at [www.tunicamiss.com](http://www.tunicamiss.com) or call 1-888-4TUNICA.

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