



MS SPORTS HALL OF FAME & MUSEUM  MS AGRICULTURAL & FORESTRY MUSEUM  MS CHILDREN'S MUSEUM  MDWFP'S MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE 

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mississippi's First Museum District Recognized by Southeast Tourism Society

JACKSON, Miss. (April 9, 2019) --The LeFleur Museum District (LMD), Mississippi's first of its kind, has been recognized by the Southeast Tourism Society (STS) with the **Shining Example Partnership Award** for cooperative tourism work in 2018. The LMD is comprised of the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum, the Mississippi Children's Museum, MDWFP's Museum of Natural Science, and the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame & Museum.

The group of four unique museums located at the Lakeland Drive and I-55 interchange produced an economic impact of \$28.4 million for the city of Jackson in 2018. "Visit Jackson is proud of the combined efforts the four museums have made to join together and promote themselves as one outstanding destination. Their successes prove that partnerships work, and we are thrilled to be a supporter of their future endeavors," said Rickey Thigpen, President/CEO of Visit Jackson.

The LeFleur Museum District was established in May 2014 during National Travel & Tourism week and offers a joint-ticket option for visitors to experience all of the museums at a discounted rate. The LMD has thrived since its creation by forming a collective branding alliance, utilizing shared marketing, and hosting joint events.

The LeFleur Museum District's signature event, the Mississippi Science Fest (MSF) presented by C Spire, was also recently recognized by the Mississippi Tourism Association as "**Small Festival of the Year**" drawing a three-day attendance of over 4,500 visitors. One of the main goals of MSF is to showcase the diverse opportunities in STEM industries available to the future workforce of our state. This annual event consists of an elementary school age coding challenge presented by C Spire, a Field Trip Friday for students, and an affordable joint-ticketed day on Saturday featuring hands-on activities and exhibitors in STEM industries. This year's Mississippi Science Fest will take place in the LeFleur Museum District on September 19-21, 2019.

"There is no question each of the four museums which make up LMD have benefitted from working together collectively. We have been able to draw thousands of Jackson area residents as well as tourists to the area," commented Susan Garrard, Mississippi Children's Museum President/CEO and current LeFleur Museum District President. "Collaborating on events such as the Mississippi Science Fest brings new educational opportunities to children and families in Mississippi, and gives hope for a brighter future for the residents of our state."

"We're very excited to continue our partnership with the Mississippi Children's Museum and the LeFleur Museum District, which encourages young children to explore and learn more about computer science and information technology disciplines through the Mississippi Science Fest," said C Spire CTO Carla Lewis. "Congratulations to everyone on the well-deserved recognition."

About the LeFleur Museum District

The LeFleur Museum District (LMD) promotes four uniquely different museums and is located at a one-quarter mile stretch, just off I-55 and Lakeland Drive in Jackson, MS. The LMD's mission is to inspire visitors from around the region and nation with a sense of wonder. LMD creates opportunities for growth for all museums involved through joint events and cross-promotion of individual activities. Associations like the LeFleur Museum District are important developments to this region's creative economy. The district partners with nearby restaurants and hotels to build the area as a premier destination for visitors. For more information, visit LeFleurMuseumDistrict.com.

About STS

Headquartered in Roswell, Georgia, STS is an association that works to unite all segments of the travel and tourism industry through its four pillars of education, advocacy, recognition, and networking. Established in 1983, STS is an engaged network of

1000+ members from twelve states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. For more information, visit SoutheastTourism.org.

About C Spire and the C Spire Foundation

C Spire is a diversified telecommunications and technology services company that provides world-class customer-inspired service and a superior comprehensive suite of wireless communications, high-speed Internet access and a range of other telecommunications products and services to consumers and businesses. The C Spire Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and its mission is to support STEM education that strengthens digital literacy, technology and professional skills development for students in grades K-12 and at institutions of higher learning in Mississippi. For more information about C Spire or the C Spire Foundation, visit www.cspire.com or follow on Facebook at www.facebook.com/cspire or Twitter at www.twitter.com/cspire.