



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 1, 2020

**Contact: Paige Manning, Director of Marketing and Public Relations
(601) 359-1163
paige@mdac.ms.gov**

Dedication and Ribbon Cutting Marks Grand Opening of the New Mississippi Trade Mart

JACKSON, Miss. — Today, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson officially opened the new Mississippi Trade Mart to the public, with a building dedication and ceremonial ribbon cutting.

“This is an historic day for the state of Mississippi,” said Commissioner Gipson. “I am proud to unveil the new Mississippi Trade Mart and excited for the endless opportunities its expansive and state-of-the-art facilities will provide. I want to thank the entire Mississippi legislature for authorizing the \$30 million funding to build the new Trade Mart and make improvements to the Mississippi Fairgrounds. I would also like to thank U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith, former Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant and Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves for their support in this endeavor.”

Miss Mississippi Mary Margaret Hyer acted as mistress of ceremonies and opened the dedication program with a rendition of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Musical performances were provided by Music Director Slater Murphy of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and praise team leaders with New Horizon Baptist Church. Commissioner Gipson was joined by Dr. Kenny Digby, Director of the Christian Action Commission; Reverend David Tipton, Mississippi District Superintendent of United Pentecostal Church International; Bishop Ronnie Crudup, Senior Pastor of New Horizon Church International and Diocese Bishop for the Fellowship of International Churches; Bishop James Swanson of the Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church; and Bishop Joseph Kopacz of the Catholic Diocese of Jackson, who offered remarks and blessings.

Following the building dedication program, Commissioner Gipson and Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves provided remarks at the ribbon cutting ceremony. On behalf of her mother, U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith, Anna-Michael Smith also provided comments about the new Trade Mart.

“Today is the culmination of a lot of hard work by a number of dedicated Mississippians, and we would not be here today without U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith, former Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce. I want to give a huge thanks to U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith for being such a passionate advocate and supporter of this project. I also want to thank her successor, Andy Gipson. Thank you, Commissioner Gipson, for seeing this incredible project through to completion and for your continued leadership in serving the agriculture community in the state of Mississippi,” said Governor Reeves.

The new Trade Mart on the Mississippi State Fairgrounds will serve as an economic boost for the state. Every year, the Trade Mart hosts more than 200,000 people at the nearly 80 events held. Attached to the Mississippi Coliseum, the new structure expands the functionality and flexibility of both facilities, making it more marketable for hosting a wide array of events. The new Mississippi Trade Mart is 110,000 square feet, and includes a lobby, a 2,500 square foot commercial kitchen, two cafes, a reception area, a “front porch” area and three massive trade halls. The trade halls can be configured to provide a seamless connection to the Coliseum’s arena floor, allowing for larger trade shows and events than ever before. The “front porch” area provides a large, covered space for exterior events and opens onto a new plaza that is shared with the Coliseum, which recently underwent a \$2.2 million renovation.

“The features of the new Mississippi Trade Mart will expand business opportunities for the Fairgrounds and attract new, prospective events and activities for the public to enjoy,” said Michael Lasseter, Acting Director of the Mississippi State Fairgrounds Complex.

The new Mississippi Trade Mart was designed by Wier Boerner Allin Architecture, and Fountain Construction was the general contractor. Visit www.mdac.ms.gov/state-fairgrounds online for more information.

###

Photo attached.



Commissioner Andy Gipson officially opens the new Mississippi Trade Mart on the State Fairgrounds with a building dedication and ceremonial ribbon cutting. Pictured left to right: Janet Trotter, Committee Assistant for the Senate Finance Committee; Mike Jenkins, Project Manager with Fountain Construction; Jack Allin, Principal Architect with Wier Boerner Allin Architecture; Sully Clemmer, Project Architect with Wier Boerner Allin Architecture; Jamie Wier, Principal Architect with Wier Boerner Allin Architecture; Michael Boerner, Principal Architect with Wier Boerner Allin Architecture; Jackson Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba; Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves; Commissioner Andy Gipson; Anna-Michael Smith; Vince Mangold, Mississippi House of Representatives Agriculture Committee Vice-Chairman; Miss Mississippi Mary Margaret Hyer; Bill Pigott, Mississippi House of Representatives Agriculture Chairman; Mike Chaney, Mississippi Commissioner of Insurance; Mississippi Representative Bubba Carpenter; and Dane Maxwell, Mississippi Public Service Commissioner.