

Saturday, Oct. 25, 2008

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Hollywood is 1st Coast casino to offer housing aid

SUN HERALD

Hollywood Casino in Bay St. Louis has allocated \$20,000 to help employees buy homes through the Regional Employer Assisted Collaboration for Housing program.

REACH Mississippi, a program of the Gulf Coast Renaissance Corp., will match Hollywood Casino's contributions three to one, giving four eligible families a total of \$20,000 in down-payment and closing-cost assistance.

Hollywood applicants must be in good standing, have been employed with the company for at least two years and commit to staying with the casino for five additional years. Hollywood is the first Coast casino to participate in the program to help with housing costs in Katrina's wake, joining about 20 other businesses and 40 public-sector employers.

The Jackson County Civic Action Agency will add \$350,000 to the \$2 million REACH scholarship pool for Coast employers. A grant from the McCormick Tribune Foundation's Hurricane Katrina Relief Campaign made the JCCAA funding possible.

Scholarship funds are available only to households earning less than 100 percent of the Area Median Income (about \$50,000 for a family of four). The income limit is adjusted depending on the number of people in the household and county of residence.

How to participate

The Gulf Coast Renaissance Corp. encourages businesses to participate in the REACH program, open to employees in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties. To learn more, call 896-3386, visit reachmississippi.com, or e-mail reach@msgcrc.com.

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