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### **Galveston's Alive, Thriving, and Open for Business!**

Galveston, TX – Galveston is far from dead despite a recent online publication's opinion piece. "Galveston is a diverse community supported by thriving economic engines," stated Mayor Joe Jaworski. On the mend from one of the costliest natural disasters in recent U.S. history, federal assistance will help fuel Galveston's revival. In Ike's aftermath the Island stands poised to accept a nearly \$2 billion infusion of federal dollars for infrastructure, housing, port, and medical center repairs. **"Galveston is alive, thriving, and open for business,"** Jaworski affirmed.

#### **Tourism:**

- Galveston hosts approximately 5 million visitors annually. In addition to sunbathing on the Island's 32 miles of beach, tourists travel to the Island to attend the city's 180 annual special events including the largest motor cycle rally of its kind, Mardi Gras, and the LoneStar Triathlon & 70.3 Ironman Competition.
- These visitors generate an \$800 million economic impact to the Island each year.
- Despite the nation's gloomy economy, Galveston's local hotel occupancy tax revenues came in 17% above 2009 this past May and 25% above 2009 in June.
- Looking ahead to 2011, the City will celebrate the 100 year anniversary of the Hotel Galvez. Built after the 1900 storm in a show of confidence, the resort is the only historic hotel property on the Texas Gulf Coast.
- Enhancements at Moody Garden's Palm Beach and Rainforest Pyramid will also debut in 2011.

#### **Port of Galveston:**

- The Port of Galveston is a bustling port with grain, cargo, and cruise ship operations.
- Galveston is ranked at the 4<sup>th</sup> busiest cruise port in the U.S. and generates \$1.1 billion in direct spending in Texas.
- In 2011 two new cruise ships, the *Carnival Magic* and the *Carnival Triumph*, will call Galveston home and dock along the Island's waterfront.

#### **University of Texas Medical Center (UTMB):**

- UTMB expects to receive about \$1 billion from FEMA for repairs and renovation of facilities that were damaged by Hurricane Ike. Contractors are already working to restore campus buildings and officials expect that, by the end of 2010, nearly 1,000 contract workers will be employed helping to rebuild UTMB. Old buildings will be demolished to make room for the university's future expansion plans, which includes a bigger and better academic medical center.
- UTMB is home to the Blocker Burn Unit, world renowned for its innovations in the treatment of burns. The unit is undergoing a \$10 million renovation that will double the number of specialized patient beds, enhance UTMB's burn care and translational research, provide more training for nurses—including nurse retention and recruitment—and improve the comfort of patients' families who have lengthy stays at the burn unit.
- UTMB has four schools, the School of Medicine, the School of Nursing, the School of Health Professions and the Graduate School for Biomedical Sciences and all are enjoying robust enrollment figures. The School of Medicine, for example, just started the new semester for the Class of 2014 and the class size is at capacity, 230.
- UTMB also is home to the Galveston National Laboratory, a \$174 million facility that was dedicated just weeks after Hurricane Ike hit. The national laboratory did not flood and sustained no damage. And earlier this year, UTMB opened the Specialty Care Center at Victory Lakes, a \$61 million investment.
- Earlier this year UTMB became the 49<sup>th</sup> member of the Houston's Texas Medical Center, formalizing collaborative efforts in research, clinical enterprise and education.