

# Businesses set to welcome MC students Back to the Bricks



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Business owners are invited to participate with the City of Clinton, Main Street Clinton and the Clinton Chamber of Commerce as they welcome new and returning Mississippi College students to the community at the annual Back to the Bricks block

party. The event is held annually and allows the local business community the opportunity to introduce their business to the students and welcome them to Clinton. The event is part of Mississippi College's Welcome Week festivities and has proven to be a student favorite.

Back to the Bricks will be held on

Tuesday, August 27, from 5 until 7 p.m. along the brick streets of Jefferson Street. Close to a thousand students will attend, which gives local businesses an opportunity to showcase their business to the new and returning students.

To register for the event, businesses can pick up an application

at the Main Street Clinton office or the Chamber office or email [tlytal@clintonms.org](mailto:tlytal@clintonms.org). Applications must be received by August 9 to reserve a booth. The event is free to Main Street and Chamber member businesses, \$100 for non-members to participate. For more information, call 601-924-5472.

## Undercover human trafficking operation nets over 20 arrests

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The Clinton Police Department recently worked with the Hinds County Sheriff's Department to conduct an operation to identify human trafficking and prostitution in the metro Jackson area and along the Interstate 20 corridor in Mississippi.

Over the past year, Clinton Police and Fire personnel have undertaken extensive training to identify human trafficking and how to effectively help victims be rescued from the illicit and illegal activities. The operation is part of the continued efforts to utilize the training received to effectively address the issue of human trafficking along Interstate 20.

The multi-day operation, which was conducted during the week of July

22-28, resulted in twenty-three arrests spanning multiple charges, including prostitution, procuring the services of a prostitute, drug possession, and enticing a child for sexual purposes.

The goal of the operation was to identify human trafficking issues in the metro area, working in coordination with human trafficking experts to assist victims caught in the grip of modern day slavery. Human trafficking is when a trafficker uses force, fraud or coercion to compel a victim for the purposes of forced labor or commercial sexual exploitation.

The Clinton Police Department did not identify any patterns or activity to suggest that human traffickers are operating extensively in Clinton.

All suspects were identified online as they attempted to solicit prosti-

tution-related activity. These online interactions resulted in the arrested persons traveling into Clinton to conduct their illegal activities, therefore, resulting in an arrest.

"Human trafficking isn't just an international crime or something that only happens in other parts of the country; it could happen here in the metro area and especially along major Interstate corridors in Mississippi," said Clinton Police Chief Ford Hayman. "Human trafficking is, in most cases, a hidden crime that operates in the dark. The more we can educate the public and raise awareness to its existence, the more quickly we can identify victims and perpetrators."

The investigation is ongoing. Clinton Police are withholding the names of suspects and victims in an effort to

assist in the rescue of the victims from their situations. One exception is the information regarding a 29-year-old male, Corey Myers, of Apopka, Florida, who was arrested for felony enticement of a child to meet for sexual purposes.

Arrests include individuals from the metro area as well as Oklahoma, Michigan, Florida and Virginia.

The Clinton Police Department takes human trafficking seriously and encourages anyone who might have information pertaining to human trafficking in the area to contact CPD at 601-924-5252 with tips for further investigation. If you suspect someone may be a victim of human trafficking, call and make a report to the national human trafficking hotline at 1-888-373-7888.