

**Friday, April 28 & Saturday, April 29, 2023**  
**The Dock of Gulfport**



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**GULF COAST DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL**  
**2023 SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What is dragon boat racing?** Dragon boating is a unique kind of boat racing. A dragon boat team consists of 20 paddlers sitting two abreast, a cox who steers the dragon boat from the rear and a drummer who sits at the front. The boat itself is 46 feet long and will go as fast as you can paddle! The team of paddlers work in unison to propel the boat forward from a standing start, the aim being to reach the finish line in the fastest time.
- **What are the origins of dragon boat racing?** Dragon boating began in China more than 2,000 years ago, originating from superstitious beliefs that the boat racing would ensure prosperous and bountiful crops. The celebrations were conducted during the summer solstice, the time of the year when natural calamities such as disease and death were more prevalent. Accordingly, dragon boating has come to symbolize both humankind's struggle against nature and the fight against dangerous enemies.
- **How does the festival benefit our community?** All proceeds from the festival directly benefit United Way of South Mississippi, which seeks to improve the health, education and financial stability of all people in Hancock, Harrison, Pearl River and Stone counties.
  - In the 2021-2023 grant cycle, UWSM awarded \$430,000 in Community Impact grants to 12 area nonprofits.
  - UWSM awarded over \$438,000 to our community partners for rapid response to those affected by COVID-19 for housing assistance, utilities assistance, food, medications, PPE and basic needs.
  - UWSM operates PreK4Ward, which offers free preschool to 180 children in nine classrooms; savings programs, including the SingleCare prescription discount card and free tax preparation services, such as VITA; Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, which delivers one book each month to children from birth to age 5; United Way Readers, which pairs adult volunteers with children to provide reading practice; and the Little Free Library program, which promotes neighborhood book exchanges through free public bookcases.
  - UWSM also leads the Fill the Bus school supply drive and MLK, Jr. Day of Action Diaper Drive.
- **How can I help?** Easy ... paddles up! Register you and your team members for this unique team-building experience. Sponsorship opportunities are enclosed in this packet, and there are also numerous volunteer opportunities. If you are interested in providing volunteers, please contact Kellee Caldwell at [kcaldwell@unitedwaysm.org](mailto:kcaldwell@unitedwaysm.org).

## DATES AND OTHER INFORMATION

- The final day to register a team will be Friday, March 31, 2023 by 5 p.m.
- To receive the full benefit of your sponsorship, including a \$100 participant sponsorship discount, please register no later than Friday February 24, 2023 by 5 p.m.
- If you secure a new team to register and compete in this year's Dragon Boat, you will receive an additional **\$100 participant sponsorship discount**.
- All other payments are due to United Way of South Mississippi on Friday, March 31, 2023 by 5 p.m.
- The Tent City will open on Friday, April 28, 2023. The Parade of Teams will take place Saturday morning at 8:30 a.m. The festival will be held from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 29, 2023, at The Dock on Seaway Road in Gulfport (13247 Seaway Rd., Gulfport, MS 39503).
- Please note, in the event of inclement weather, other disasters or events beyond our control, sponsorships are nonrefundable.

# PARTICIPANT SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

## DYNASTY SPONSOR – \$8,500

- Two dragon boat teams with two preferred practice times.
- Naming rights as the event sponsor on all collateral materials.
- Promotion in all media appearances in the LIVE UNITED newsletter, on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- Mentions during the festival and a 30-second profile to be read before the first race by the Master of Ceremonies.
- Two 10-foot by 10-foot adjacent tent spaces in a prime location.\*
- Two banners at the festival; one banner may be displayed at the start line.\*
- One member of your organization will participate in the ceremonial Dotting of the Dragon's Eye to start the festival.

## EMPORER SPONSOR – \$4,500

- One dragon boat team with one preferred practice time.
- Listed as an event sponsor on all collateral materials.
- Promotion in all media appearances, in the LIVE UNITED newsletter, on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- 15-second profile to be read throughout the day by the Master of Ceremonies.
- One 10-foot by 10-foot tent space in a prime location.\*
- One banner at the festival.\*

## JADE SPONSOR – \$2,500

- One dragon boat team with one practice time.
- 15-second profile to be read throughout the day by the Master of Ceremonies.
- Listed as an event sponsor on select collateral materials.
- Promotion on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- One 10-foot by 10-foot tent space.

## DRAGON BOAT SPONSOR – \$1,600 FOR-PROFIT AND \$1,300 NON-PROFIT

- One dragon boat team with one practice time.
- Promotion in the LIVE UNITED newsletter, on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- One 10-foot by 10-foot tent space.\*

*\*Organizations are asked to provide their own tents, banners and other promotional items. Please note that United Way of South Mississippi is not responsible for any lost or damaged items.*

# NON-PARTICIPANT SPONSORSHIPS

## FINISH LINE SPONSOR – \$500

- Listed as an event sponsor on select collateral materials.
- Promotion in the LIVE UNITED newsletter, on the United Way website and on all of our social media platforms.
- Signage displayed at the finish line.\*
- One member of your organization will sound the horn to start the final race of the festival.

## AWARDS CEREMONY SPONSOR – \$500

- Listed as an event sponsor on select collateral materials.
- Promotion in the LIVE UNITED newsletter, on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- Signage displayed at the ceremony.\*
- One member of your organization will help present awards.

## PHOTO BOOTH SPONSOR – \$500

- Listed as an event sponsor on select collateral materials.
- Promotion in the LIVE UNITED newsletter, on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- Signage displayed at the photo booth.\*

## CRAWFISH BOIL SPONSOR – \$500 (4 SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE)

- Listed as an event sponsor on select collateral materials.
- Promotion in the LIVE UNITED newsletter, on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- Signage displayed at the food booth.\*
- Your organization may provide promotional items to festival participants.\*

## PATRON SIREN SPONSOR – \$250

- Promotion in the LIVE UNITED newsletter, on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.

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***Volunteers are needed! Want to help? Email [kcaldwell@unitedwaysm.org](mailto:kcaldwell@unitedwaysm.org).***

\*Organizations are asked to provide their own tents, banners and other promotional items. Please note that United Way of South Mississippi is not responsible for any lost or damaged items.



- Dynasty Sponsor – \$8,500
- Emperor Sponsor – \$4,500
- Jade Sponsor – \$2,500
- Dragon Boat Sponsor – \$1,600
- Dragon Boat Sponsor (Non-Profit) – \$1,300
- Finish Line Sponsor – \$500
- Awards Ceremony Sponsor – \$500
- Photo Booth Sponsor – \$500
- Crawfish Boil Sponsor – \$500
- Patron Siren Sponsor – \$250

## SPONSORSHIP FORM

Please select the sponsorship that you and your organization prefer, and complete the contact information below. Return this form by mail or by email to the following:

**United Way of South Mississippi**  
11975 Seaway Road, Suite B-170  
Gulfport, MS 39503 • 228.896.2213  
[mbouchon@unitedwaysm.org](mailto:mbouchon@unitedwaysm.org)

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Name

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Organization

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Street Address

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City, State and Zip Code

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Phone Number

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Email Address

Please invoice me for the amount I have selected.



United Way  
of South Mississippi