

GULF COAST DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL 2026



Saturday, April 25

Harrah's Great Lawn



**GULF COAST DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL
2026 SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **How can I participate?** 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 email volunteer@unitedwaysm.org.

HOW DOES THE FESTIVAL BENEFIT OUR COMMUNITY?

All proceeds from the Gulf Coast Dragon Boat Festival directly benefits United Way of South Mississippi, whose purpose is to support early childhood education and literacy, access to health care, financial stability, youth opportunity and community resiliency for individuals and families in Hancock, Harrison, Pearl River and Stone counties in South Mississippi.

- **In the last grant cycle, United Way of South Mississippi awarded \$400,000 in Community Impact Grants to 14 local agencies who support our initiatives.**
- **United Way of South Mississippi operates 11 free PreK classrooms in the Harrison County and Gulfport School districts, serving 220 4 year-old students.**
- **United Way of South Mississippi is the local sponsor of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library with over 2,000 local children enrolled at no cost to their families.**
- **United Way of South Mississippi sponsors the SingleCare prescription savings card and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA).**
- **During the Government shutdown and SNAP benefits crisis, United Way of South Mississippi mobilized resources to provide food for 141 families (647 people) at three local Elementary Schools and Community Impact Partners. In addition, UWSM and partners served 676 families (2,704 people) through local mobile pantries.**
- **United Way of South Mississippi acts as the Harrison County Call Center in times of disaster. UWSM took over 4,000 documented damage reports following Hurricane Zeta.**
- **85 roofs repaired/replaced because of the Zeta Roof Project, where UWSM acted as the call center for this project.**
- **United Way of South Mississippi is the lead organization for the annual Fill the Bus school Supply Drive and sponsors the Dr. Martin Luther King Day of Action and Diaper Drive.**

DATES AND OTHER INFORMATION

- The final day to register a team is Friday, March 27, 2026 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 27, 2026 by 5 p.m. If you secure a new team to register and compete in this year's Dragon Boat, you will receive a **\$100 participant sponsorship discount**.
- Sponsorship payments are due to United Way of South Mississippi no later than Friday, March 27, 2026 by 5 p.m.
- The Tent City will open on Friday, April 24, 2026 for setup only. 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 25, 2026, at Harrah's Great Lawn (280 Beach Blvd., Biloxi, MS)
- Please note, in the event of inclement weather, other disasters or events beyond our control, sponsorships are nonrefundable.

PARTICIPANT SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

EVENT SPONSOR – \$15,000

- Two dragon boat teams with two preferred practice times.
- Naming rights as an event sponsor on all collateral materials.
- Promotion in all media appearances on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- Mentions throughout the race.
- Two 12-foot by 12-foot adjacent tent spaces in a prime location.*
- Four banners on display at the festival.*
- One member of your organization will participate in the ceremonial Dotting of the Dragon's Eye to start the festival.

DYNASTY SPONSOR – \$8,500

- Two dragon boat teams with two preferred practice times.
- Promotion in all media appearances on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- Mentions throughout the race.
- Two 12-foot by 12-foot adjacent tent spaces in a prime location.*
- Four banners on display at the festival.*

JADE SPONSOR – \$3,000

- One dragon boat team with one practice time.
- Listed as an event sponsor on select collateral materials.
- Promotion on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- One 12-foot by 12-foot tent space.*
- One banner at the festival.*
- Prime tent placement.

DRUM LINE SPONSOR - \$2,500

- Naming opportunity.
- Promotion on the United Way website and all social media platforms.
- Announce the winner of the Drum Line.
- Two banners on display at the festival.*
- Grand Prize is \$1,000.

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

- One dragon boat team with one practice time.
- Promotion on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- One 12-foot by 12-foot tent space.*
- One banner at the festival.*

*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 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.
- Mentions throughout the race.

AWARDS CEREMONY SPONSOR – \$500

- Listed as an event sponsor on select collateral materials.
- Promotion 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.
- A banner on the awards stage.

START LINE SPONSOR – \$500

- Listed as an event sponsor on select collateral materials.
- Promotion on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.
- One member of your organization will sound the horn to start the race.
- Signage displayed at the start line.*
- Mentions throughout the race.

PATRON SIREN SPONSOR – \$250 **10 SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE**

- Promotion on the United Way website and on all social media platforms.

Volunteers are needed! Want to help? Email volunteer@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.

- Event Sponsor – \$15,000
- Dynasty Sponsor – \$8,500
- Jade Sponsor – \$3,000
- Drum Line Sponsor – \$ 2,500
- Dragon Boat Sponsor (For-Profit) – \$1,600
- Dragon Boat Sponsor (Non-Profit) – \$1,300
- Finish Line Sponsor – \$500
- Awards Ceremony Sponsor – \$500
- Start Line 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
jheath@unitedwaysm.org**

Name

Organization

Street Address

City, State and Zip Code

Phone Number

Email Address

- Please invoice me for the amount I have selected.

