



From the Bustling Downtown to Relaxing Beachfront, We Tour Phelps' Gulfport Office and the City's Landmarks with Partner Jim Wylly



January 30, 2022 — Phelps has twelve locations across the region. Each month, we will highlight one of our office locations and share why we love living and working in these communities. In January, we visited our Gulfport office.

Phelps expanded to the Mississippi Gulf Coast in 2001 to meet existing client needs and expand services to new clients in the area. As the second largest city in Mississippi, Gulfport is a hotspot for commerce, transportation and tourism. With a bustling port and 26 miles of man-made beach, it is the perfect mix of modern city and coastal town.

On a beautiful Friday afternoon, **Jim Wylly** took us on a tour of the city and showed us his favorite spots. Jim managed the Gulfport office for almost 20 years, seeing the office through the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and the rebuilding efforts that followed. While managing his own rebuild, Jim helped locate employees displaced by the storm, reorganized the staff and helped to get the office up and running by working remotely after FEMA commandeered Phelps' office space.

Our first stop was the beach! Within two minutes of leaving our office, we were at the beach, where residents and visitors were fishing, exercising and enjoying the beautiful January day. The white sand beach stretches along the Gulf of Mexico from Bay St. Louis to Ocean Springs. From the shore, you can see the boats that go out for recreational and commercial fishing, the industrial port that welcomes commerce into the region, and open areas perfect for families to spend time outside.

You can also see the new Mississippi Aquarium that opened in 2020. Jim showed us his grandkids' favorite exhibit and shared how the aquarium rehabilitates rescued animals. The aquarium mimics its location, highlighting animals from brown and blue water habitats and giving guests the full experience of marine life that calls the Gulf Coast home. And if you want to see some of the aquarium's residents up close, you can book a behind-the-scenes experience.

With the beach always in sight, it's easy to forget that Gulfport is the second largest city in Mississippi, housing the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi. Its downtown leads to a number of restaurants with great outdoor dining spaces, reminding you that you're only a stone's throw from the beach. The historical buildings and streets are complimented with modern architecture and artwork. During the day, the alleys offer a nice place to stroll, but at night they come alive with music and art.

Gulfport is centrally located and within minutes you can be in Biloxi, Ocean Springs, Pass Christian, Bay St. Louis and a number of other coastal communities. In Biloxi, you are surrounded by some of the biggest casinos and the best names in entertainment. If you drive past Biloxi, you are in the artist community of Ocean Springs, which boasts farm-to-table dining, numerous festivals throughout the year, great museums and plenty of local shopping. But our next stop was Pass Christian!

We drove along the beautiful beaches and past the harbor to a walkable area filled with restaurants and local shops. We stopped at a client owned restaurant, The Deck! In the restaurant's open-air setting, you feel light and airy while enjoying delicious tacos — and in dry January, mocktails — as Jimmy Buffet wails away in the background. After greeting the locals in the restaurant, Jim told the story of a cardiologist who cured his patient's high blood pressure by prescribing weeks on the Mississippi Gulf Coast! After one day in the area, this



story resonates as a reflection of the relaxed environment and beauty that surrounds you everywhere in this region. Thanks to our Gulfport team for hosting us and showing us around the area Phelps is proud to call home!

About Phelps Dunbar

Phelps is a full-service law firm of 300 attorneys. We blend valuable traditions and progressive ideas to foster a culture of collaboration among lawyers in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, North Carolina and London. Our six core practice groups —admiralty, business, health care, insurance, labor and employment, and litigation — work together to offer clients a progressive, diverse practice and partnership that handles a broad range of sophisticated business needs regionally, nationally and internationally.