Gallup to Unveil Key Economic and Social Indicators at Michigan Chamber's 2004 Future Forum on Sept. 17

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Gallup will unveil an in-depth look at the perceptions of Southeast Michigan residents on a wide variety of issues at the 6th Annual Michigan Legislative & Business Leaders Future Forum, which will be held September 16-17 at the Four Points By Sheraton in Ann Arbor. The Michigan Chamber Foundation and a coalition of local and regional chambers of commerce are sponsoring the two-day event.

A few key findings from analysis conducted by Gallup's Principal Consultant Dawn Royal include:

* Metro residents rate the current economic conditions as bleak, but view future economic conditions very favorably. A notable exception to this is the city of Ann Arbor, whose residents rate current economic conditions extremely favorably.

* Metro residents feel that preparations and improvements occurring in the region for upcoming major sporting events will positively impact the local economy, including 60% who feel the Super Bowl will have a significant impact on the economy of metro Detroit and 50% who feel the 2005 Baseball All Star Game will have a significant impact.

* Only about one-quarter of metro Detroit residents are extremely satisfied with the area as a place to live and would recommend the area as a place to live. There is surprisingly little difference in opinion between Detroit residents and those in the suburbs. However, 38% of metro Detroiters feel that the area is a better place to live than it was five years ago.

* Southeastern Michigan has some very positive aspects, including its colleges and universities, availability of cultural opportunities and the area as a place to live for minorities. However, it is seen as having some challenge areas as well, including its public transportation, its ability to serve as a tourist destination, and the current state of its highway system.

* Two-thirds of area employees are not engaged in their current job, including 85% of those employed in the automotive industry. (Gallup measures employee engagement through a twelve-question metric of key employee sentiments that have been proven to link to business outcomes including absenteeism, productivity, safety, profit and other key outcomes.)

* Employees who are engaged at work are much more likely to rate the area positively, 30% more likely to stay in the area and more than three times as likely to recommend the area as a place to live-outcomes of which will lead to greater economic growth to the area.

When asked how to build a stronger region, Randall Beck, Managing Partner of Gallup Michigan said, "One company at a time."

The poll, conducted between August 9-22, included 1,004 residents of Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties and the city of Ann Arbor. The study had a margin of error of +/- 3.1% at the 95% level of confidence. Among the many attributes measured were the key indicators of:

1. Economic optimism
2. Overall satisfaction with Southeast Michigan as a place to live
3. Pride in the positive attributes of Southeast Michigan
4. Employee engagement
5. Perceptions of healthcare quality and accessibility
6. Perceptions of local schools
7. Perceptions of area leaders

"This is the most comprehensive report to date on the opinions of the economy, education, engagement, and overall loyalty to southeast Michigan," said Beck. "This data is full of pearls that give business and civic leaders valuable insight when making decisions that affect the citizens of Southeast Michigan."

Registration for the two-day conference is $349 per person. To register, or for more information, call 1-800-748-0344 or visit the Michigan Chamber's web site at http://www.michamber.com/ .

The Gallup Organization has studied human nature and behavior for more than 70 years. Gallup employs many of the world's leading scientists in management, economics, psychology, and sociology. Gallup performance management systems help organizations increase customer engagement and maximize employee productivity through measurement tools, coursework, and strategic advisory services. Gallup's 2,000 professionals deliver services at client organizations, through the Web, at Gallup University's campuses, and in 40 offices around the world.

The Michigan Chamber Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established to plan, promote and conduct non-partisan education research and programs regarding issues facing Michigan including, but not limited to, taxation, government regulation, health care, hazardous waste, crime, tourism and recreation, welfare, government spending and transportation.

SOURCE: The Gallup Organization; Michigan Chamber Foundation

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