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Contacts:

Melissa Huffman – Vice President of Public Relations

Kiwana Denson – Founder and President

beachsafetyadvocate@gmail.com

GULF COAST GROWTH VENTURES CONTRIBUTES TO BEACH SAFETY EFFORTS THROUGH \$1,000 BILLBOARD DONATION

CORPUS CHRISTI, TX, February 1, 2021 – Gulf Coast Growth Ventures, an ExxonMobil-SABIC joint venture, has donated \$1,000 to the Je'Sani Smith Foundation to promote beach safety and rip current awareness in San Patricio County. This donation is funding an educational billboard located along Texas State Highway 35 between Portland and Gregory.

There have been seven deaths on Texas beaches due to rip currents or high surf in 2020. Rip currents are a daily occurrence at area beaches, especially near structures like piers and jetties. Educating beachgoers on the dangers present on area beaches is critical to preventing further loss of life within our community.

The billboard provided by the Gulf Coast Growth Ventures donation educates motorists on the flags present at South Texas beaches. These flags indicate if hazardous conditions are present on area beaches and the billboard's location will provide this information not only to residents of San Patricio County, but to all visitors traveling along the Texas coast.

"We live in a community surrounded by water and we want tourists to enjoy that attraction," stated Kiwana Denson, Founder and President of the Je'Sani Smith Foundation. "Having said that, we have a responsibility to ensure tourists and all other beachgoers are informed of beach hazards and know how to stay safe while having fun."

Making good beach safety decisions is only achieved through relentless and consistent visual and verbal beach safety education and awareness programs and initiatives. Improving unwanted fatalities and injuries at our beaches is accomplished when there is a full understanding of the beach safety flag system and the dangers of rip currents and swimming near piers, jetties and other structures.

The Je'Sani Smith Foundation is named for Je'Sani Smith, a high school senior swept away by a rip current at a Nueces County beach. The Je'Sani Smith Foundation works to provide beach safety and rip current education to make sure that no family experiences a similar loss. For more information or to donate to the Foundation, visit www.jesanismithfoundation.org.

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