



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Art: Saracen Casino Resort -- Architectural renderings, construction plan, slideshow (May/June 2019):
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/9mzxzc231fv4sqy/Saracen%20May%202014.pptx?dl=0>

Saracen Development, LLC, Breaks Ground on Region's Bright Economic Future

LITTLE ROCK (June 13, 2019)—Granted a casino gaming license today, Saracen Development, LLC, has announced it will move forward immediately with its planned \$350 million investment in a luxury casino resort in Pine Bluff, Ark.

John L. Berrey, Chairman of the resort development group, said the project will have an immediate, significant and long-term positive impact on the city as well as Jefferson County and the state of Arkansas.

“We were granted the state’s casino license today, and we are digging in -- literally as we speak -- to build a showcase of a resort that will supercharge the region’s economy and excite the people of Arkansas,” Berrey said.

Saracen Development projects that construction of the resort will create about 1,000 jobs immediately. Those jobs will last about 11 months. Shortly before opening in spring 2020, Saracen Casino Resort will hire about 1,100 permanent employees.

“We view ourselves as community developers. That means we develop a commercial enterprise for the right reasons -- for the betterment of communities and their citizens,” Berrey said. “I believe the people of Pine Bluff are already seeing that. They understand this is where we came from; this is a homecoming for us.”

The parent of Saracen Development is the Downstream Development, which is owned by the Quapaw Nation, the American Indian tribe originally from the area of east and south Arkansas. The tribe was forcibly moved to Oklahoma in the 1830s. One of the Quapaw’s last leaders in Arkansas, Saracen, is buried in Pine Bluff, therefore the resort’s name.

Saracen Development was the only applicant for the Jefferson County casino license, which was one of four casinos created by state Amendment 100 which passed in the 2018 general election.

Berrey and the rest of the Saracen Development team has worked closely with the Economic Development Alliance of Jefferson County, local chambers, city and county officials to create momentum leading up to today's announcement of the casino licensing by the Arkansas Racing Commission. Berrey said his construction team has been directed to begin moving dirt at the construction site right away.

Construction hiring will concentrate on locally and Arkansas-owned sub-contractors and workers. There will also be an emphasis on purchasing supplies and equipment locally to help build the Pine Bluff economy. Saracen Development also anticipates that the 1,100 permanent employees will also largely come from the local communities, with training and development for a wide variety of positions to ramp up a few months prior to opening.

###