



Shriners International

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shriners Head Back Home to Tampa for their 142nd Imperial Session

Shriners Annual Convention Set to Begin on July 3

June 9, 2016 (Tampa, Florida) — Shriners are coming home to Tampa for their annual convention from July 3 to 7. The Tampa Bay area is home to Shriners International Headquarters, Shriners Hospitals for Children - Tampa and Egypt Shriners.

An abundance of red fezzes, mini-cars, live music and family fun will descend upon the streets of downtown Tampa as it gears up to receive approximately 8,000 visitors from around the world who are in town to celebrate the 142nd Imperial Session of Shriners International.

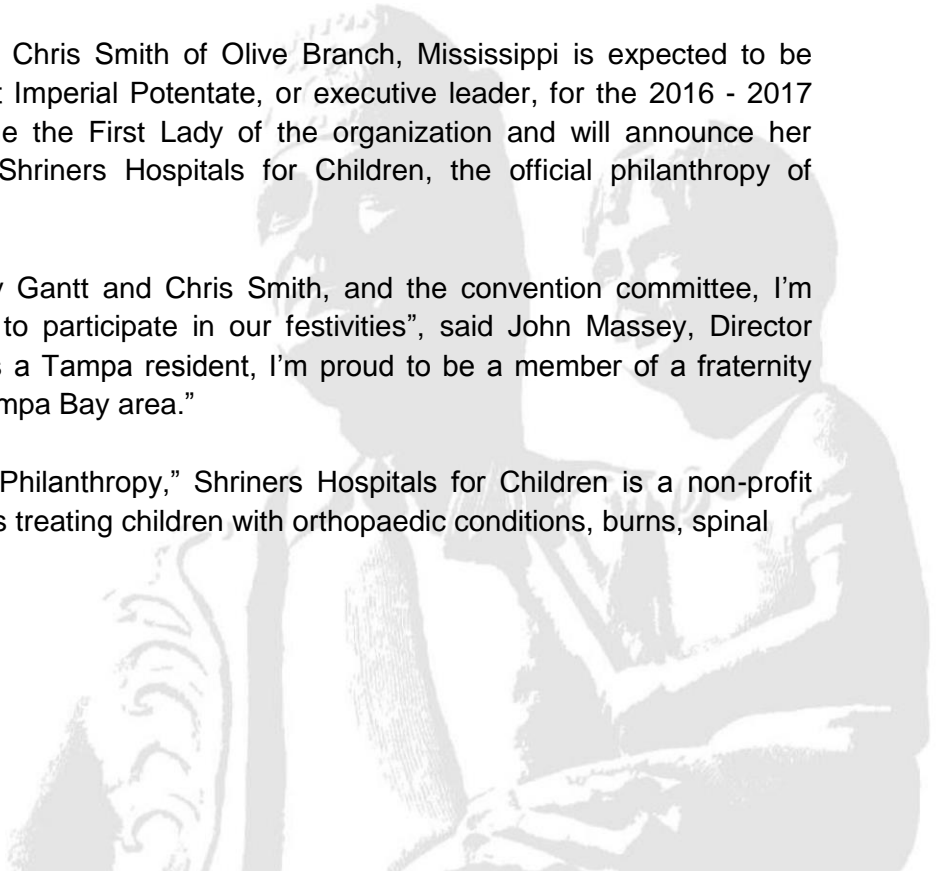
The Imperial Session is an annual business meeting and gathering of the international fraternity comprised of nearly 200 temples (chapters) in 7 countries. The Imperial Session will run from July 3 to July 7, with events mainly taking place at the Tampa Convention Center.

The most well-known event of the convention is the Shriners Parade, during which historic and iconic Ybor City will be filled with mini-cars, clowns, bands and more. Shriners International is proud to bring its convention to Tampa, which the fraternity calls “home.” The annual event was also held here in 2006.

As part of the Imperial Session, Chris Smith of Olive Branch, Mississippi is expected to be named the organization’s newest Imperial Potentate, or executive leader, for the 2016 - 2017 term. His wife, Ethel will become the First Lady of the organization and will announce her fundraising program benefiting Shriners Hospitals for Children, the official philanthropy of Shriners International.

“On behalf of Imperial Sirs Jerry Gantt and Chris Smith, and the convention committee, I’m excited to invite the community to participate in our festivities”, said John Massey, Director General for the Convention. “As a Tampa resident, I’m proud to be a member of a fraternity with such important ties to the Tampa Bay area.”

Deemed “The World’s Greatest Philanthropy,” Shriners Hospitals for Children is a non-profit health care system of 22 locations treating children with orthopaedic conditions, burns, spinal





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cord injuries and cleft lip and palate, regardless of their families' ability to pay. Members of the fraternity operate, volunteer and support their philanthropy, Shriners Hospitals for Children.

Shriners Hospitals for Children – Tampa is located on the University of South Florida campus and it has been a beacon of excellence in pediatric specialized care since 1985. In 2015 alone, more than 5,700 children benefited from the services at the Tampa location.

As part of the activities, Shriners Hospitals for Children will reveal two new national patient ambassadors for 2016 - 2017 with the premiere of a video documentary of their heartwarming and encouraging real life experiences. The Imperial Session will begin with a Public Opening on Sunday, July 3. For more information and a full schedule of events, visit the [Imperial Session website](#) or follow us on social media www.facebook.com/ShrinersInternational.

About Shriners International

Shriners International, a fraternity based on fun, fellowship and the Masonic principles of brotherly love, relief and truth, founded Shriners Hospitals for Children as its official philanthropy in 1922. What began as one hospital, is now a world-renowned health care system with 22 locations in three countries. The fraternity, which has nearly 200 chapters in several countries and thousands of clubs around the world, continues to support this unique health care system. Please visit shrinersinternational.org to learn more.

About Shriners Hospitals for Children

Shriners Hospitals for Children changes lives every day through innovative pediatric specialty care, world-class research and outstanding medical education. The 22 locations in the United States, Canada and Mexico provide advanced care for children with orthopedic conditions, burns, spinal cord injuries and cleft lip and palate.

Shriners Hospitals for Children is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and relies on the generosity of donors. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent permitted by law. For more information, please visit www.shrinershospitalsforchildren.org.

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