

The producers of “Party Down South” are facing the hard reality of searching for a new home for their raunchy reality TV show on CMT.

Faced with outright shunning by locals, they’ve packed up and are hunting for more welcoming filming locales far from Pensacola — and they’ve taken more than a million worth of contracts with them, said sources in contact with Burbank-Calif.-based 495 Productions.

It seems Southern pride trumps economic gain.

Appetite 4 Life director Celeste Southard said producers told her they were scouting Fort Myers after folks here were offended by the image the series, which follows the outrageous, alcohol-fueled antics of eight so-called Southern young adults, would cast on the Pensacola-area.

On their way out of town the production company, which also produces “Jersey Shore,” canceled a \$150,000 catering contract with her nonprofit to feed the cast and crew for 56 days. The organization planned to use the cash to feed terminally ill people.

While looking around the region for another place to shoot, Southard said a producer told her officials in some of the cities told them point blank: “We saw the news and we don’t want you.”

They hit the road after a social media campaign made it clear that the filming of the second installment of the CMT series was not welcome here, she said.

Clearly a big blow for the producers came when hotelier Julian MacQueen, late last week, scrubbed a deal to provide the production company nearly \$1 million in hotel rooms at his three Gulf front properties on Pensacola Beach — Hampton Inn, Hilton and Holiday Inn Resort.

“It was really an image thing,” MacQueen said Monday about his decision. “We spent millions and millions of dollars investing in an image for Pensacola Beach that gets away from the whole Redneck Riviera crap. I hate that image. That’s not who we are.”

“All you have to do is watch a trailer of the reality show and realize it will undo everything we’ve been trying to put together,” he said.

As a Southerner born and raised in Birmingham, Ala., MacQueen said his decision was also personal.

“It sure puts a stereotype out there, and it’s the lowest form of entertainment,” he said

An email to the production company’s public relations firm went unanswered by deadline Monday.

MacQueen and Southard say that while the financial losses sting, they have no regrets.

“We weren’t expecting the business, but it would have been a huge injection of money to put with our new kitchen and IMPACT 100 grant,” Southard said about a grant that allowed the agency to greatly expand its pantry and kitchen that feeds terminally ill residents with donations from the community and revenue from the catering arm.

“We’re here because of the community and would not be here at all without the support we get from the community,” she said. “We want what the community wants.”

Yes it’s painful, MacQueen said.

“But it was the thing to do,” he said. “You never make up that business. What you can do to make yourself feel better is look at the business it possibly could have misplaced.”

*Follow Kimberly Blair at [twitter.com/kblairPNJ](https://twitter.com/kblairPNJ) or [facebook.com/kimberlyblairpnj](https://facebook.com/kimberlyblairpnj).*