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**Wichita Selected to Host YMCA National Tournament**

**WICHITA, KAN.** (June 4, 2014) — Top student gymnasts from across the nation will travel to Wichita next summer for the 2015 YMCA National Gymnastics Championship. Announced today, YMCA of the USA selected the Greater Wichita YMCA and the Wichita community to host this national tournament, which has been showcasing the talent and hard work of young athletes since it premiered in 1938.

The 77th YMCA National Gymnastics Championship will take place at the Century II Performing Arts & Convention Center Tuesday, June 23 – Saturday, June 27, 2015. Hosted for the first time in Wichita, the event will bring 5,300 gymnasts, family members and coaches from 100-plus YMCAs nationwide to Wichita. Go Wichita Convention & Visitors Bureau conservatively estimates the event to generate a $2.7 million economic impact from direct spending and additional indirect spending to the local economy through transportation, restaurants and entertainment.

Jim Weaton, National Director of Events for YMCA of the USA stated that, “With this selection, we are sure the YMCA of Wichita will make this an extraordinary event for our Y gymnasts, their families and friends.”

The Greater Wichita YMCA, Go Wichita Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the Greater Wichita Area Sports Commission have been working together for months to make this selection a reality. YMCA of the USA noted that Wichita was chosen over other applicants due to the tremendous community support evidenced during the site visit, the quality of the venue sites for competition, the expertise and energy demonstrated by the Greater Wichita YMCA and its staff, and the community’s history of providing quality community sporting experiences to participants during past hosting opportunities.

This first-time collaboration will not only celebrate young athletes and the community, but the additional visitors will also contribute to Wichita’s billion-dollar travel and tourism industry.

“The Y has given so much to our community and continues to give by taking the lead to bring this event to Wichita,” said Go Wichita President and CEO Susie Santo. “The work performed by this partnership is a perfect example of the great things we can accomplish with the help of friends like YMCA and the Greater Wichita Area Sports Commission.”

Those interested in volunteering to help plan or host the event may contact Lori Spencer at lori.spencer@ymcawichita.org or may visit ymcawichita.org/volunteer to complete a volunteer application. Tickets to attend the 2015 YMCA National Gymnastics Championship will be available in the spring.

“We know we have hundreds of volunteers to recruit and a lot of exciting work ahead of us,” commented Greater Wichita YMCA Chief Executive Officer Dennis Schoenebeck. “But, we can’t wait to showcase this wonderful community we call ‘home.’ The goal of the Y and our partners is for every participant to leave feeling like they’re now part of our Wichita family.”

**About YMCA of the USA**

The YMCA is committed to the health of spirit, mind and body in individuals, families and communities across the country. The nation’s 2,663 YMCAs, which serve nearly 20.2 million people each year, including 9.4 million children under the age of 18. Through a variety of programs and services focused on the holistic development of children and youth, family strengthening and health and well-being for all, YMCAs unite men, women and children of all ages, faiths, backgrounds, abilities and income levels. From urban areas to small towns, YMCAs have proudly served America’s communities for nearly 160 years by building healthy spirit, mind and body for all. Visit [www.ymca](http://www.ymca) to find your local Y.

**About Greater Wichita YMCA**

The Greater Wichita YMCA is a non-profit organization that serves more than 275,000 kids and adults through child care, camping, urban outreach programs and healthy lifestyles activities. Nearly two out of three kids in Sedgwick and Butler Counties participate in YMCA activities and more than 72,000 participants receive free and assisted programs. Within the YMCA’s financial capabilities, no person is refused program or membership privileges because of inability to pay.

**About Go Wichita Convention & Visitors Bureau**

Go Wichita markets the greater Wichita area as a major convention and tourism destination, thereby enhancing the economic development of the city, county, region and state. Go Wichita is led by President and CEO Susie Santo. In 2012, nearly $1 billion was spent by visitors to the Wichita area.

**About Greater Wichita Area Sports Commission**

The Greater Wichita Area Sports Commission is a facilitator, driving the collaborative efforts of the region in attracting and hosting a wide variety of sporting events. The Sports Commission provides the experience and expertise in sports marketing and event management that has established our region as a sports destination. Since 1997, the Greater Wichita Area Sports Commission has facilitated over 500 events in the Wichita area with a combined economic impact of over $372 million.

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