



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME TO HOST PINNACLE OF FITNESS™ CHALLENGE
PROGRAM
FIRST MIDDLE SCHOOL CHALLENGE TO TAKE PLACE AT HALFTIME OF NCAA
DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP FIRST-ROUND GAME ON
MARCH 22 AT THE JOYCE CENTER

INDIANAPOLIS---The NCAA® recently announced the details for the 2009 Pinnacle of Fitness™ challenge program which will energize middle school age children in nine cities across the United States and allow them to compete for a chance to win the national title in St. Louis during the week of the 2009 NCAA Women's Final Four®.

The Joyce Center at the University of Notre Dame is one of the nine sites for the competition and will host its first Middle School Challenge at halftime of the first-round game of the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Championship that will be played on March 22. An additional Middle School Challenge will take place on March 24 during halftime of the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Championship second-round game at the Joyce Center. For tickets call 574/631-7354 or go online to www.und.com.

The Pinnacle of Fitness challenge is an NCAA Division I women's basketball initiative of healthy living and education that will challenge and improve individuals and their communities. The 2009 Pinnacle of Fitness challenge is expected to involve 100 middle schools in nine selected cities, with 74,000 middle school students participating.

“The Pinnacle of Fitness challenge is an important and fun initiative that will connect the great game of basketball with youth in communities across the country to help in the promotion of improved physical fitness,” said Sue Donohoe, NCAA vice president of Division I Women’s Basketball. “We have enjoyed the challenge of beginning the program in nine markets in 2009 and hope to expand the reach of the program in the future.”

The cornerstone of the program is the Middle School Challenge, which will educate and challenge students to improve their level of physical fitness through leading active lives, goal setting and developing life skills. The program will reward youth for improving their health and wellness and will be conducted at sites that will host a first- and second-round or regional round of competition during the 2009 NCAA Division I Women’s Basketball Championship.

The Middle School Challenge will begin with each of the competing middle schools conducting in-school physical fitness assessment and testing. The top-10 students from the competing middle schools will compete in progressive on-court competitions at the sites during the regular season and again during the championship. Competitions will take place during pregame or halftime of women’s basketball regular season or championship games scheduled at the following sites:

Host Institution/Site

**Dates of Middle School Challenge
Competititon**

Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Pete Maravich Assembly Center

January 22, February 1, March 22
and 24

University of California
Berkeley, California
Haas Pavilion

February 21, March 5, 7, 28 and 30

Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky
E.A. Diddle Arena

February 8, 22 and 25, March 22
and 24

University of Georgia Duluth, Georgia Gwinnett Center	January 29, March 21 and 23
Texas Tech University Lubbock, Texas United Spirit Arena	March 22 and 24
North Carolina State University Raleigh, North Carolina RBC Center	January 29, February 19 and 26, March 28 and 30
San Diego State University San Diego, California Cox Arena	January 31, February 4 and 28, March 21 and 23
University of Notre Dame South Bend, Indiana Joyce Center	March 22 and 24
University of Connecticut Storrs, Connecticut Harry A. Gampel Pavilion	February 24 and 28, March 22 and 24

Competing middle schools and individual students will be recognized through school rewards that include fitness support funding for equipment, special events and awards. The winning middle school from each region will be awarded the opportunity to compete in the NCAA National Pinnacle of Fitness challenge on center court at NCAA Hoop City® Refreshed by Coca-Cola® during the 2009 Women's Final Four. There, one middle school will be named the 2009 Pinnacle of Fitness challenge champion.

For more information in regard to the Pinnacle of Fitness challenge, go online to <http://www.ncaa.com/champ/wbasket-div1-champ.html> or contact Denee Barracato at 317/917-6643 (dbarracato@ncaa.org).

About the NCAA and Division I Women's Basketball

The NCAA is a membership-led nonprofit association of colleges and universities committed to supporting academic and athletic opportunities for more than 400,000 student-athletes at more than 1,000 member colleges and universities. Each year, more than 54,000 student-athletes compete in NCAA championships in Divisions I, II and III sports. Visit www.ncaa.org and www.ncaa.com for more details about the Association, its goals and members and corporate partnerships that help support programs for student-athletes.

NCAA women's basketball is characterized by strong fundamentals, high quality of play, sportsmanship, role model student-athletes and family oriented entertainment. The latest NCAA Graduation Success Rate figures show 81 percent of NCAA Division I women's basketball players graduate. In terms of the NCAA Academic Progress Rate, which measures term-by-term academic success, the overall score is 960, well above the NCAA benchmark of 925.

For the latest news in regard to the Women's Final Four, visit www.ncaa.com/finalfour.