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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEW SPORTS COURTS MAKE DEBUT AT HAWAII CONVENTION CENTER  
– AAU Honolulu Grand Prix volleyball tournament first event to take court, Feb. 18-20 –**

**HONOLULU** – The Hawai'i Convention Center (HCC) will debut its new sports courts this President's Day weekend with the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Honolulu Grand Prix women's volleyball tournament being held in the Kamehameha Exhibit Hall, Feb. 18-20.

An estimated 1,000 women athletes, ages 12 to 18 years, from the mainland U.S. and throughout Hawai'i are taking part in the tournament this weekend.

HCC invested \$1.1 million to purchase the fully portable sports courts, which can be configured to simultaneously stage up to 28 regulation volleyball or badminton matches, 18 high school basketball games, or 11 futsal (indoor soccer) courts. HCC also has acquired a regulation NBA- and NCAA-approved basketball court with a solid wood floor.

The move by HCC to diversify its usage of Hawai'i's premier meetings facility supports the Hawai'i Tourism Authority's sports marketing efforts to attract more global amateur and professional events to the State.

The sports courts also allows the Meet Hawai'i sales team to strategically utilize HCC to capitalize on the lucrative sports events market with group events, while positioning HCC as the State's newest venue to attract teams and fans from domestic and international markets.

"These new sports courts are an exciting addition to the portfolio of the Hawai'i Convention Center and allows us to develop a new market segment that holds a lot of potential for group business in the years to come," said Teri Orton, HCC general manager. "We are thrilled to be welcoming the AAU Honolulu Grand Prix volleyball tournament as our first client and to show how the Center's location and facilities are ideal for hosting these type of events. We also appreciate the Hawai'i Tourism Authority's support in working with our team over the past year to bring this to fruition."

HCC and HTA began exploring the feasibility of investing in the sports courts last year when the HCC team saw increasing interest to bring athletic events to Hawai'i. However, the high cost of shipping courts to the Aloha State was the number one reason event organizers could not commit to bringing sports events to the islands.

"We've already generated two sports bookings which will generate more than \$1.3 million in tax revenue for the State, so the courts will have paid for themselves in the first year," Orton said. "This is just the beginning to what I believe is a new way for Hawai'i to enhance its ability to attract sporting events that have strong followings around the world."

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Leslie Dance, HTA vice president of marketing and product development, said, "The potential to tap into this sports market and bring offshore business to the State was clearly there, so the decision was made to purchase the courts and make it easy for potential clients to say 'yes' to Hawai'i. This initiative is in alignment with HTA's tourism strategic plan, which includes bringing an innovative approach to how we generate new business opportunities for our lodging partners through the meetings market. It also enables us to have Hawai'i's athletes compete with other teams from around the world right here in our own backyard."

In addition to volleyball, badminton, basketball and futsal, the courts can also accommodate tournaments and events for wrestling, gymnastics, martial arts, dance, cheerleading, group fitness activities, and table tennis. Event planners can add elevated seating as an option for spectators. There are also 690 parking stalls available at HCC.

HCC's mid-Pacific location is a perfect location for sports events with participants traveling from east and west. There are more than 30,000 overnight hotel rooms in Waikīkī, with more than 28,000 of them located within a 1.5-mile radius. HCC is conveniently located within walking distance of Waikīkī and Ala Moana, offering an abundance of entertainment, shopping and dining choices.

HCC's open-air design brings the outside in and its talented culinary staff will ensure guests are well fed with menus highlighting a true taste of Hawai'i from farm to table.

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**About Meet Hawai'i**

Meet Hawai'i is a collaboration of the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) and Hawai'i Convention Center (HCC) to reinforce the brand of the Hawaiian Islands as a world-class destination for business meetings, conventions, and incentive programs. The marketing efforts of the Meet Hawai'i team are overseen by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), the state of Hawai'i's tourism agency. HTA was established in 1998 to ensure a successful visitor industry well into the future. Its mission is to strategically manage Hawai'i tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with the state of Hawai'i's economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires, and visitor industry needs. For information about Meet Hawai'i and the hosting of meetings, conventions and incentives, please visit [MeetHawaii.com](http://MeetHawaii.com).

**About AEG Facilities**

AEG, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Anschutz Company, is the leading sports, entertainment and venue operator in the world. AEG Facilities, a stand-alone affiliate of AEG, owns, operates or consults with more than 100 of the industry's preeminent venues worldwide, across five continents, providing complete venue management, as well as specialized programs in operations, guest services, ticketing, booking, sales and marketing. AEG Facilities also provides resources and access to other AEG-affiliated entities, including live event producer, AEG Live, AEG Global Partnerships, AEG Development, AEG 1Earth, AEG Encore and AEG Creative to support the success of AEG venues across the globe. The Los Angeles-based organization owns, operates or provides services to the world's most elite venues, including STAPLES Center (Los Angeles, Calif.), StubHub Center (Carson, Calif.), Nokia Theatre L.A. LIVE (Los Angeles, Calif.), Sprint Center (Kansas City, Mo.), KFC Yum! Center (Louisville, Ky.), AmericanAirlines Arena (Miami, Fla.), Prudential Center (Newark, N.J.),

Target Center (Minneapolis, Minn.) and BBVA Compass Stadium (Houston, Texas). Among the roster of world class convention centers and other facilities managed by the division are the Los Angeles Convention Center, Hawai'i Convention Center (Honolulu, HI), Qatar National Convention Center, Oman Convention and Exhibition Center (Muscat, Oman), Sydney International Convention, Exhibition, and Entertainment District, Cairns Convention Center and Darwin Conventions Centre. Other venues include Oracle Arena and O.co Coliseum (Oakland, Calif.), CONSOL Energy Center (Pittsburgh, Penn.), Rabobank Arena (Bakersfield, Calif.), Mercedes-Benz Arena (Shanghai, China), MasterCard Center (Beijing, China), The O2 Arena (London, England), O2 World (Berlin, Germany), O2 World Hamburg (Hamburg, Germany), Ahoy Arena (Rotterdam, Netherlands), Itaipava Arena Pernambuco (Recife, Brazil), Allianz Parque (Sao Paulo, Brazil), Allphones Arena (Sydney, Australia), Ulker Sports Arena (Istanbul, Turkey), Ericsson Globe Arena (Stockholm, Sweden) and the. For more information, please visit [aegworldwide.com](http://aegworldwide.com).

**Special note to media:** HTA recognizes the use of the 'okina ['] or glottal stop, one of the eight consonants of the (modern) Hawaiian language; and the kahakō [ā] or macron (e.g., in place names of Hawai'i such as Lāna'i). However, HTA respects the individual use of these markings for names of organizations and businesses.