



News Release

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Lawrence, KS wins its bid for 2017 USA Track & Field Junior Olympic Championships

Lawrence: The USA Track and Field Junior Olympic Championships will be coming to Lawrence in 2017, eXplore Lawrence, the city's tourism bureau, announced Saturday.

USA Track & Field youth chairs selected Lawrence over Des Moines, Iowa today at their convention in Houston to bring the event here July 23 – 30, 2017.

The bid for the event was made in conjunction with Kansas Athletics. Sheahon Zenger, director of KU Athletics, Doug Banks, associate athletic director, and Stanley Redwine, head coach of track and field/cross country, made a special trip to Houston to assist in the presentation, according to Bob Sanner, eXplore Lawrence. Sanner said, "Dr. Zenger was our MVP."

More than 9,500 young athletes, ages 8 to 18, and 33,000 family members, coaches and spectators are expected to come to Lawrence and the surrounding area for the seven-day event. The Championships could produce an economic impact from \$17 to 22 million dollars for northeast Kansas, Sanner said.

Lawrence's Rock Chalk Park will be the host venue for the event. Sanner said eXplore Lawrence has been working with other convention and visitors bureaus throughout the area, from Topeka and Overland Park to Olathe and Kansas City, to secure hotel rooms for all the potential visitors.

The bid to host the Junior Olympics in Lawrence has been a joint effort of eXplore Lawrence, its non-profit subsidiary Lawrence Sports Corporation, and the Missouri Valley USA Track and Field Association.

Sanner said they have been highlighting the attractions of Lawrence and the surrounding area to this organization for some time, in preparation for the bid to bring the Championships here. "It came down to a vote between our city and Des Moines," Sanner said. "I think we showed them we had a whole lot to offer."

"This event will have a significant economic impact on the city of Lawrence, and there will be more events to come," said KU Athletics Director Sheahon Zenger. "This also makes a great statement about the KU Track and Field program and Head Coach Stanley Redwine. We would not have won this bid without the effort of Bob Sanner and the city of Lawrence, and Cliff Wiley and the Missouri Valley Athletic Association."



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“Landing this event will give us a wonderful opportunity to introduce coaches, athletes and families from all over the country to our unmistakable city,” said Toni Dixon, marketing and communications manager, eXplore Lawrence said. “We know Lawrence will make a great impression.”

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