



**Media Contacts**

Amanda Schoonmaker  
Connecticut Convention Center  
[aschoonmaker@ctconventions.com](mailto:aschoonmaker@ctconventions.com)  
860.748.7315

Craig Davis  
Varsity All Star Brands  
[cdavis@varsityknoxville.com](mailto:cdavis@varsityknoxville.com)  
865.777.6841

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**THE CONNECTICUT CONVENTION CENTER HAS SPIRIT, HOW ABOUT YOU?**

*State-Owned Facility Secures Mutli-Year Commitment for Spirit Festival Cheer and Dance Nationals*

**Hartford, CT (May 15, 2014)** – The Connecticut Convention Center is pleased to announce that it has secured a two-year commitment with Varsity All Star Brands for the organization’s Spirit Festival Cheer and Dance National Championships. The two-day competition features participants ranging in age from as young as three years to college age and is one of the largest cheer and dance national championships in the Northeast.

“During our 2014 event earlier this month, we had 267 teams competing for the coveted “National Championship” title,” explains Craig Davis, Vice President of Event Operations for Varsity All Star Brands (Knoxville). “Teams traveled to Hartford from as far as Delaware and Maine to showcase their expert high-flying stunts and tumbling skills,” Davis continues.

The event is renowned as one of the most prestigious cheer and dance gatherings in the country and, in 2014, three paid bids and nine at-large bids were awarded to the World Championships in late April along with two bids and eight at-large bids awarded to the Summit held in early May.

Attendance for the event has more than doubled in a two-year period, since 2012. This year alone, the event brought over 250 teams along with over 20,000 family members and fans downtown with 2,400 overnight rooms and 1,200 rooms on peak from Friday, March 7 through Saturday, March 8, 2014. Numbers for the upcoming years are expected to meet, if not exceed, these counts.

“We have worked with Varsity Brands on Spirit Festival since 2009,” says Michael Costelli, General Manager of the Connecticut Convention Center. “We are very excited to be continuing our partnership for another two years.” Varsity Brands has committed to holding the event at the venue for the next two years, with the potential to continue into 2017.

**About Varsity All Star Brands**

Varsity All Star is made up of over 100 people working for 21 brands who eat, sleep, and breathe All Star. Like you, we are gym owners, coaches, and parents, and we conduct over 250 competitions across the United States and Canada and are more committed to the future and growth of the All Star market than ever before. Varsity All Star strives to lead the industry in original ideas, services, and products. Your Varsity All Star Advisor should be your contact throughout the entire competition season and will have answers to all of your questions.

**About the Connecticut Convention Center**

The Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford is the state’s premier meeting venue and the largest full-service convention facility between New York and Boston. Overlooking the beautiful Connecticut River, it features 140,000 square feet of exhibition space, a 40,000-square-foot ballroom and 25,000 square feet of meeting space, as well as ample sheltered parking. The facility is served by more than 6,500 local area hotel rooms, including the 22-story Marriott Hartford Downtown, adjacent to the Convention Center. The venue is professionally managed for the State of Connecticut by Waterford Venue Services, an affiliate of Waterford Hotel Group. For more information, please visit [www.ctconventions.com](http://www.ctconventions.com).

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