

# Press Release

Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau

September 15, 2011

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## Other Cities Selected for State Basketball, Soccer Championships

**Springfield, Mo.** – Despite a valiant effort to get two large events moved to Springfield, the Missouri State High School Activities Association elected to keep the boys’ and girls’ state basketball championships in Columbia through 2016 and awarded soccer championships for 2013-15 to Blue Springs.

The Convention & Visitors Bureau, Springfield Sports Commission, Missouri State University, Lake Country Soccer and Springfield-Greene County Park Board worked together to respond to requests for proposals from MSHSAA for both events.

“Both tournaments, particularly basketball, are huge events and would have been an economic boon for the City of Springfield,” said Lance Kettering, director of the Sports Commission and sports sales manager for the CVB.

Thanks to the support of entities and businesses that agreed to sponsor the basketball tournament, Springfield’s bids were strong, said CVB president Tracy Kimberlin. The sponsorships were for \$5,000 per business for each year the basketball championships were in Springfield.

“Our hats are off to the City of Springfield, Greene County, O’Reilly Hospitality, Elliott Lodging and John Q. Hammons Hotels and Resorts for agreeing to sponsor the event,” Kimberlin said. “We also sincerely appreciate the efforts of the people at MSU who spent many hours helping prepare the bid.”

Springfield plans to bid on the 2016, 2017 and 2018 soccer championships again next year, Kimberlin said. The soccer tournament has been in St. Louis for 47 years and the offer of free facilities in Blue Springs proved enticing to the MSHSAA board of directors.

The basketball championships for 2017, 2018 and 2019 will be available for bid again in 2013. MSHSAA basketball was last in Springfield in 1991 and has been in Columbia since then. Other MSHSAA events have taken place or are scheduled in Springfield, including softball, baseball, golf and tennis.

The basketball and soccer championships are larger events and not getting them in Springfield is disappointing. Even so, Springfield won’t give up.

“You can’t win if you don’t play the game,” Kimberlin said. “With the support of the community and the hard work of the CVB and Sports Commission staffs, we played it well.”

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