

More Than 27,000 Athletes Competing in World's Largest Volleyball Event This Month, With Matches Held at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex

Marquee AAU event expected to bring more than \$52 million to Central Florida during eight-day event; 43rd annual event has more than doubled in participants over last five years

ORLANDO, Fla. (June 7, 2016) - More than 27,000 athletes from across the country, including **thousands of Orlando-area athletes**, are expected to bump, set and spike during the 43rd annual AAU Girls' Junior National Volleyball Championships in Central Florida, which began **June 18**.

The eight-day event has held the title of **largest volleyball event in the world since 2012** when the 16U Club division set the current Guinness Book of World Records mark. It attracts approximately **40,000 spectators, 9,000 coaches** and **400 college coaches** and takes place on **177 courts** between ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World Resort and Orange County Convention Center.

"The AAU Girls' Junior National Volleyball Championships is the pinnacle event for AAU Volleyball athletes," said Dr. Roger J. Goudy, President/CEO of the AAU. "The relationships we have built throughout Central Florida help make this a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all our athletes and their families."

The marquee annual event for the **fastest-growing sport in the AAU**, the AAU Girls' Junior National Volleyball Championships features 31 divisions of competition, including an international division with teams from Brazil, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Slovenia.

The AAU Girls' Junior National Volleyball Championship has **more than doubled in the last five years**, increasing from approximately 1,000 teams in 2011 to more than 2,300 teams in this year's event. Still growing, the **economic impact to Central Florida is expected to be over \$52 million per year** with participants and their families visiting local hotels, shops, restaurants and other Central Florida businesses.

"We are excited to welcome the AAU Girls' Junior National Volleyball Championships to Orlando," said Visit Orlando President and CEO George Aguel. "More than 75,000 athletes, spectators and coaches will experience our wide variety of hotels, local attractions and award-winning dining that make us a top host city for sporting events."

Select championship games will air live on WatchESPN and the WatchESPN application from ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex, which has become the **worldwide leader in ESPN3 content production**. Additional

games will be streamed live on Sports Network Live.

For scores and info during the AAU Girls' Junior National Volleyball Championships, visit www.aauvolleyball.org. You can also follow the event on Twitter at [@AAUVolleyball](https://twitter.com/AAUVolleyball), [#AAUVBNatls](https://twitter.com/AAUVBNatls) and on www.facebook.com/realaauvolleyball.

Media interested in covering this event should contact Cody Norman, AAU Public Relations Manager at cnorman@aausports.org.

ABOUT THE AAU:

The Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) is one of the largest- non-profit volunteer sports organizations in the country. As a multi-sport organization, the AAU is dedicated exclusively to the promotion and development of amateur sports programs. Founded in 1888 to establish standards and uniformity in sports, the AAU philosophy of "Sports For All, Forever" is now shared by nearly 700,000 members and 150,000 volunteers across 35 sports programs and 55 U.S. districts. The second-largest sport in the AAU, volleyball had more than 120,000 members in 2015 with more than 300 licensed AAU indoor and beach volleyball events across the nation. For more information, visit www.aauvolleyball.org.