



First Ever American National Netball Team To Visit Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy For Girls

(June 8, 2012 - Washington, DC, USA) - Netball America has [announced](#) the first ever American National Netball Team who will represent the USA at the inaugural **World University Netball Championships** which will take place at the Cape of Good Hope Sports Center in Cape Town, South Africa, July 2-7, 2012. These young ladies will be the first generation American Netball athletes and they are looking forward to the challenge of being ambassadors for America and the sport.

The National Team will be conducting [goodwill visits and other charity work](#) leading up to these championships. Netball America is very excited to partner with the **Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy For Girls** to provide a unique opportunity for the local community surrounding Maverton, South Africa on Tuesday June 26, 2012. "The aim of our visit to the Academy is to help inspire the young girls that anything is possible. The Vice Captain of the national team, Jordan Keen, will talk about how Netball and sports helped her during her recovery from a ski fall when she was 12, which caused an onset of **Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy** and how she was dependent on crutches and a wheelchair for the next 5 years. At 17, she was implanted with a spinal cord stimulator and was told she never could play contact sports again. We will speak with the school kids, teachers and local community leaders about how physical activity and nutrition are essential elements to academic success and lifelong achievements as well as how sports can create confidence and promote leadership. This event is open to the local community and our Team USA Netball athletes and coaches will also be conducting education clinics", said Sonya Ottaway, President, Netball America.

The theme song for Team USA Netball is 'River of Life' which is a duet between Johannesburg native Lebo Kgasapane and one of our Netball America supporters American Idol finalist [Michael Johns](#). Lebo was a 21 year old rape victim who died of AIDS at the young age of 22. Her dying wish was to sing on a CD the world would hear. Leaving only a 60 second audio cassette behind, Michael wrote a song, incorporated her voice and recorded this as a gift to her parents. Michael is very supportive of our trip to South Africa and has graciously given us this song as a gift to use as it is quite appropriate when he sings "We will always stand together". We look forward to having this song played during assembly at our visit to the Academy.

Other exciting events the team is participating in to promote health and wellness are:

- This Netball America team are the first global Netball participants to be a part of the **Presidential Active Lifestyle Award** program (PALA+). The squad has been taking part in physical challenges associated with the PALA + program;
- Netball America and TEAM USA Netball are also proud to support a **Youth Mission to Nsoko, Swaziland** in June 2012. Netball America is donating equipment and clothing to their youth programs. Netball is one of the top sports in this region and the local children have been teaching the visiting American youth groups how to play the game while they help the local communities and villages with ongoing and new projects.
- The American Netball athletes have also been '**Going The Distance**' where they are cycling the distance from Washington DC to Cape Town (12,600km) collectively as a team as part of their extensive fitness training and to raise funds for their trip.
- Not only are these young ladies amazing athletes, but they have a singing voice, so they surprised **American Idol Michael Johns** by singing a song off his album at a recent fundraiser in Los Angeles. You can watch the video [here](#).
- On Friday June 22 from 3pm Team USA Netball will perform against the USA West Coast Representative Team at the **WNBA Seattle Storm** game at Key Arena. This will have a crowd of approximately 8,000 basketball fans and the team will perform before and at half-time during the game. Purchase tickets [here](#).

The athletes are self-funding their trips. You can make a tax deductible contribution or sponsorship [here](#).

Netball America welcomes all Press and Media enquiries. Contact: Sarah Wampler at marketing@netballamerica.com

About Netball America Inc.

Netball America is the premier national Netball organization in the USA, is dedicated to the development and growth of Netball in the USA. We are focused on showing how Netball creates an exciting atmosphere of participation and supports individual progress while encouraging team unity. Netball America seeks to have Netball included as part of the core curriculum for educational systems throughout the USA as a way of promoting good health and aiding in the education of youth. Netball America is the National Governing Body for the collegiate Team USA Netball and the 2013 World Netball Festival. Netball America is a not-for-profit (501c(3)) association and has members in 27 US States.