



## USA TO ENTER WORLD UNIVERSITY NETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

**(May 11, 2012 - Washington, DC, USA)** - Netball America have announced they have been selected to enter the first ever American Netball team into 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.

The inaugural tournament organized by the Federation Internationale du Sport Universitaire (FISU) will feature some of the world's elite Netball athletes. Netball America admits the competition will be tough for a nation where Netball is not yet widely known and is not part of the school and university curriculums unlike Basketball and Soccer that are more prevalent; but the athletes are looking forward to the challenge and being ambassadors for America and the sport.

"Netball America has made Netball one of the fastest growing sports in the US and a lot of people don't realize it is a "recognized" Olympic sport played by more than 20 million people worldwide. This will be the first time **an all-American team** will represent the USA on a global Netball stage" says Netball America President, Sonya Ottaway. "We are thrilled that the core USA squad has been selected. Some of the athletes have never played nor seen a Netball until a few months ago where we recruited them from other sports such as volleyball, basketball and track and field. There is a lot of ground to cover but our rigorous training program and their natural sporting abilities have allowed them to develop Netball skills quickly."

The USA squad will be self-funding their trip to South Africa. The athletes will be appealing to Universities, local and global companies to sponsor them.. TEAM USA Netball will be taking part in physical challenges such as 'Going The Distance' where they will be cycling the distance from Washington DC to Cape Town (12,600km) collectively as a team and will be the first Netball athletes globally to participate in the Presidential Active Lifestyle Awards..

Upcoming fundraisers are planned in Los Angeles [May 19, 2012] at the NZ Consul General Residence featuring TEAM USA Netball and celebrities: Michael Johns(American Idol finalist), Troy MacCubbin (guitarist for Wilson Phillips) and country artist Stephen Rowe. There is a Michigan event in Ann Arbor on June 2, 2012.

Leading up to the championships the team will compete against the USA West Region representative team on Friday June 22 at WNBA Seattle Storm game at Key Arena, 3pm. This will have a crowd of approximately 8,000 basketball fans and the team will perform before and at half-time during the game.

One of our key players, **Jordan Keen**, suffered from a ski fall when she was 12, which caused an onset of **Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy** and caused her to be 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 basketball or contact sports again. She went to her local YMCA and they had a Netball program running and doctors gave her the okay to play Netball (which helped in gaining back her hand/eye coordination). **Now she's representing the USA and is Vice-Captain.**

**Netball America welcomes all Press and Media enquiries and presence** at these events to help raise the profile of this new team. Contact: Sarah Wampler at [marketing@netballamerica.com](mailto:marketing@netballamerica.com) or call (512) 826-7709.

### **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 2012 World University Netball Championships and the 2013 World Netball Festival. Netball America is a not-for-profit (501c(3)) association and has members in 27 US States.