



**NEWARK MAYOR BOOKER AND NEW JERSEY GOVERNOR CHRISTIE  
KICK OFF “GO NEWARK HOOPFEST” –  
A CELEBRATION OF BASKETBALL IN BRICK CITY**

**PRUDENTIAL CENTER SET TO HOST 2011 NCAA EAST REGIONAL  
DIVISION I MEN’S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT  
AS PART OF MAJOR 2011 BASKETBALL SLATE**

Newark, NJ, January 25 – Mayor Cory A. Booker and New Jersey Governor Chris Christie officially launched GoNewark HoopFest (<http://www.GoNewark.com/HoopFest>), a celebration of basketball in Brick City, at a press conference today at the Prudential Center in Newark (<http://www.prucenter.com>). With 84 basketball games scheduled this year, including the East Regional of the 2011 NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball Tournament (March 23-27), the Prudential Center will be hosting more hoops games than virtually any other venue in the country, further establishing Newark’s reputation as one of the best basketball cities in the nation and bringing even more energy to Newark’s resurgence.

To promote Brick City’s rich and storied basketball history and celebrate March Madness’ first trip to Newark, the Mayor established the GoNewark Local Organizing Committee (GNLOC) to coordinate GoNewark HoopFest alongside Seton Hall University, the official host for the NCAA Tournament. GoNewark HoopFest will provide both local residents and out-of-state fans descending on Newark for the NCAA Tournament with a wide range of information, services and activities to ensure a successful event. GoNewark HoopFest will continue during the next six months as the City welcomes other basketball events including the Nets, Seton Hall, New York Liberty, Newark National Invitational, and the NBA Draft.

“This is a wonderful and exciting opportunity to showcase the City of Newark and the region to tens of thousands of fans,” said Mayor Booker. “Basketball is so much a part of Newark’s life and heart – and ‘GoNewark HoopFest’ will highlight that connection and give Newark a chance to shine before a national audience.”

Said Governor Christie: “GoNewark HoopFest serves as a tremendous vehicle to highlight Newark and promote our entire State to basketball fans across America. At the same time, we are celebrating the importance of bringing national sporting events to New Jersey as we ramp up to the Super Bowl in 2014.”

Newark is the only new city, and the Prudential Center the only new venue, to host an NCAA Regional Tournament in 2011.



Seton Hall Law School Dean Patrick Hobbs said, "As the official host college for the NCAA Tournament here in Newark, we are proud to be part of this landmark event. We'll welcome four schools competing for the right to go to the Final Four, thousands of their fans will leave with cherished memories for what happens on the court, and they will fondly remember Newark's warm welcome as well."

"Of the 30 NBA arenas, Prudential Center ranks third behind only Madison Square Garden and the LA Staples Center with 85 basketball games being hosted this season," said Jeff Vanderbeek, Chairman and Managing Partner of Devils Arena Entertainment. "The Nets, Seton Hall, the Liberty, the NCAA's, the Newark National Invitational -- it's not just about the ice at the Rock, it's also about the hardwood!"

### ACTIVITIES

GoNewark HoopFest will kick off with the Official NCAA OPEN PRACTICE DAY on Thursday, March 24 from 12:00 noon to 4:00 pm, along with a special College Fair to be held at the Prudential Center. Students from across New Jersey will be encouraged to attend and experience first-hand the sights and sounds of the NCAA Tournament and get a chance to see some of the nation's top college basketball players. The College Fair will coincide with the Open Practice to give students an opportunity to meet with representatives of colleges in New Jersey and throughout the region. Open Practice is open to the public and free of charge.

A free FANFEST, scheduled from Thursday evening, March 24 through Sunday, March 27, will take place at Championship Plaza adjacent to the Prudential Center with a variety of family-oriented, basketball-themed and entertainment activities to be announced soon.

On Saturday, March 26, Newark will roll out the welcome mat with OPEN HOUSE NEWARK when area cultural institutions and attractions invite visitors to experience the City's hospitality. Downtown streets will come alive as a wide variety of performance groups in what is expected to be a lively "block party-like" atmosphere. Newark's area businesses and neighborhoods will be featured including Halsey Street and the famous Ironbound restaurant district which is expected to become a major meeting place for fans during the Tournament, reminiscent of last year's World Cup.

A special edition of Newark's Visitors Guide will be published to help fans plan their stay and make their way around the City, detailing the schedule of special events with information about the City's attractions and restaurants.

### SHOWCASING NEWARK

In addition to exciting games inside the Prudential Center, there will be many activities occurring throughout Newark as the city plays host to thousands of new visitors. The expectation is that as many



as 5,200 hotel rooms in the Greater Newark area will be booked and New Jersey's transportation hubs are prepared to welcome basketball fans from across the country.

A coordinated effort is being made to welcome guests to the area arriving on mass transport: NJ Transit, The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Amtrak, and Newark mass transit. GoNewark volunteers will welcome fans to the City at all major transportation hubs.

In addition, a special FREE shuttle system is going to be added to bring fans from area hotels into the Downtown and also take fans throughout the Downtown and into areas such as the Ironbound and Halsey Street.

### CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Nichelle Holder, Chief Service Officer for the City of Newark, and Rowena Madden, Director of the Governor's Office on Volunteerism, Co-Chairs of the GNLOC Volunteer Committee, will be recruiting and training 1,000 volunteers needed to make GoNewark HoopFest a world-class experience - including greeters at the various transportation hubs; street teams to direct visitors and distribute maps and guides; concierge teams to staff information tables at area hotels; and FanFest volunteers to work the outdoor games, contests and entertainment events to be held at Championship Plaza. For more information or to sign-up, please visit: <http://www.GoNewark.com/volunteer>.

As a thank you to the volunteers, Vanderbeek announced that the New Jersey Devils will host a special GoNewark HoopFest Volunteer Recognition Night where volunteers who meet the criteria will receive two free tickets to a New Jersey Devils game.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about GoNewark HoopFest, go to: <http://www.gonewark.com/hoopfest>, or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/GoNewark> and follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/GNHoopFest>.

### About GoNewark Local Organizing Committee

The Committee appointed by Mayor Cory A. Booker is a cross-section of local business leaders and government officials organized to support GoNewark HoopFest and other big events that will be coming to Newark in the future. The list of member organizations (in formation) includes: Brick City Serves/Office of the Mayor, City of Newark, Continental Airlines, Governor's Office on Volunteerism, Greater Newark Convention and Visitors Bureau, Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce, Ironbound Business Improvement District, Marriott, Newark Alliance, Newark Business Action Center, New Jersey Devils, Newark Downtown District, Newark Regional Business Partnership, NJ Transit, Port



Authority of NJ/NY/Newark Liberty International Airport, PSEG, Star-Ledger, Unionwear, Verizon, and representatives of many of Newark's hotels.

### About Prudential Center

Prudential Center opened in October, 2007 and is the first new arena built in the New Jersey, New York Metropolitan area in more than 25 years. The Rock is home to the three-time Stanley Cup Champion New Jersey Devils, Seton Hall NCAA Division 1 Men's Basketball, the NBA's NETS Basketball, and in 2011 the WNBA's New York Liberty, the NBA Draft and the NCAA East Regional Finals. Prudential Center is slated to host over 200 concerts and events in the coming year from a number of the biggest names in sports and entertainment.

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