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MORGANTOWN WELL POSITIONED TO HOST HIGH-PROFILE EVENTS FOLLOWING LOSS OF U.S. OLYMPIC TEAM TRIALS – DIVING BID

MORGANTOWN, W.VA. (JAN. 11, 2023) — USA Diving has announced its plans to host the 2024 U.S. Olympic Team Trials – Diving at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, forgoing Morgantown in 2024. However, the future of high-profile diving events is bright for Mountaineer Country following an intense 27-day bid packet preparation and weeks of anticipation,

“I cannot say enough about the professionalism, attention to detail and care the people of Visit Mountaineer Country Convention and Visitors Bureau (VMCCVB), West Virginia University (WVU), Mylan Park, the City of Morgantown, and the state of West Virginia conducted the bidding process for the 2024 U.S. Olympic Team Trials - Diving,” said Lee Michaud, president of USA Diving. “At every turn, we were greeted with superior performance, and I have rarely felt so welcome as I did during the week we spent in the wonderful community of Morgantown for our 2022 Winter Nationals. We look forward to developing our partnership and conducting truly spectacular events for a long time to come.”

Knoxville being a recognized national diving destination, a few facility modifications needed at the Aquatic Center at Mylan Park and a larger bid fee were all factors that led to USA Diving's selection. Still, the quality of the Olympic trials bid and extreme Winter National Championships success proved Morgantown's dedication and ability to host an Olympic trials event in the future.

“At the 2022 Winter Nationals, we showcased the newest indoor Olympic-quality diving facility in the country,” said Jennifer Lainhart, director of the Aquatic Center. “We know now that our staff, the VMCCVB and our community can rally to host an incredible event of this size. We have an amazing asset, and diving organizations will continue to pursue elite-level national and international events here. Long term, we hope to increase interest and desire to participate in Olympic diving in North Central West Virginia and throughout the state.”

While this is not the desired outcome, the bidding process united the community, allowing for major progress at the Aquatic Center. Updates included a parking-lot expansion and additional dryland training areas for athletes. A new sound system and judges' seating are also improvements to be made soon. All these efforts better position Morgantown to host other national-level events such as the USA Diving Spring Nationals in May and the Junior Nationals in 2024, which would bring millions of tourism dollars to North Central West Virginia.

“The Olympic trials bid process provided an opportunity for multiple groups locally, regionally and statewide to work together to showcase our destination and our Aquatic Center at a national and international level,” said Susan Riddle, president and CEO of the VMCCVB. “The value of divers, coaches, judges and visitors being impressed enough to be great ambassadors for Mountaineer Country moving forward is priceless. We will continue to work with USA Diving to attract additional nationally recognized events, positioning ourselves to bid again for the Olympic trials in 2028. Branding the Aquatic Center as a nationally competitive facility throughout the diving community will pay us dividends and help tourism development for years to come.”

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