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BOISE'S CENTURYLINK ARENA TO HOST BIG SKY BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS BEGINNING IN 2019

BOISE, Idaho (September 18, 2017) - The Big Sky Conference men's and women's basketball championships are bound for Boise.

The Big Sky Conference Presidents' Council unanimously voted to award the Big Sky Conference men's and women's basketball championships to CenturyLink Arena in Boise, Idaho. The three-year contract begins with the 2019 event.

"The Conference is excited to take our most recognizable championships to Boise, which lies right at the heart of Big Sky country," said Big Sky Conference Commissioner, Andrea Williams. "We're looking forward to partnering with CenturyLink Arena and the Boise Convention and Visitors Bureau for three years of competitive Big Sky basketball. We believe that the proximity of Boise to our campuses will benefit league institutions, and that our fans will enjoy the venue and city walkability."

"We are honored that the Big Sky Conference has chosen our arena as their home for championship basketball," said Eric Trapp, General Manager of CenturyLink Arena. The city of Boise is filled with Big Sky sports fans and to bring the best of the best into our building for three years is only going to grow that fan base. We pride ourselves in bringing new and exciting events to Idaho sports fans whenever possible, and the Big Sky Championship is certainly an event that will bring excitement to downtown Boise."

CenturyLink Arena is a 5,300-seat facility located in downtown Boise. It has been the home of the Idaho Steelheads hockey team since opening in 1997.

"Boise is ready to welcome players and fans to our city," said Carrie Westergard, executive director of the Boise CVB. "I'm grateful to the Big Sky Conference for working with the Convention and Visitors Bureau. We know our amenities, top-notch hotels and vibrant community will be a great host for these tournaments."

Boise was awarded the contract for the 2019, 2020 and 2021 Big Sky Conference basketball championships after a bid process and thorough evaluation by the athletic administrators.

The Conference began hosting a pre-determined, neutral site event for the first time in its history just two years ago, with the initial three-year contract awarded to Reno, Nevada and the Reno Events Center. The 2018 Big Sky Conference basketball championships will be held March 5-10 in Reno to complete the three-year agreement.

The 2019 Big Sky Conference basketball championships will take place March 11-16 and will feature men's and women's teams from each Big Sky member institution.

About Big Sky Conference

The Big Sky Conference is a NCAA Division I conference, spread across the western United States. The venerable Division I Big Sky Conference has nearly 4,500 student-athletes, from 16 different institutions, competing in 16 sports (seven men's, nine women's). The Big Sky Conference was founded on Feb 25, 1963, as the name "Big Sky" was adopted by the six presidents of the charter members as the name of the new conference. Four of the current league members - Idaho State University, The University of Montana, Montana State University and Weber State University - have been with the league since its inception.

CenturyLink Arena

CenturyLink Arena has served as the hub of downtown Boise's sports and music entertainment since opening its doors in the fall of 1997, hosting an average of 100 events annually and welcoming over 5.5 million attendees in 20 years. With bowl seating for 5,000 people and additional floor seating for select events, the arena is home to Idaho Steelheads hockey and the Front Street Fights mixed martial arts promotion. In two decades in Boise, CenturyLink Arena has hosted basketball, hockey, arena football, indoor soccer, Motocross, boxing, and gymnastics events. The arena also hosts numerous concerts, trade shows, and conventions each year. CenturyLink Arena is attached to the Grove Hotel, Boise's only four-diamond hotel.