

# The Big Hoopla Welcomes Teams and Fans Back to Dayton for the 2023 NCAA First Four

*The Big Hoopla is ready to take the ball and make the 2023 First Four a slam dunk.*

DAYTON, OHIO, UNITED STATES, March 13, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With the field for the 2023 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship officially set on Selection Sunday, qualifying teams, officials, and basketball fans from around the globe are turning their attention once again to Dayton, Ohio, site of the First Four. [The Big Hoopla](#) is ready to take the ball and make the 2023 First Four a slam dunk.



The Big Hoopla, a volunteer-led nonprofit formed in 2012 to organize, support, and promote all the First Four activities in the Dayton region, is prepared to welcome those 8 teams who are currently arriving and will be welcomed BIG by our volunteers.

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The First Four is an exciting time for all of us in the Dayton region”

*Terry Slaybaugh, Volunteer Chair of the Big Hoopla*

"The First Four is an exciting time for all of us in the Dayton region," said Terry Slaybaugh, Volunteer Chair of the Big Hoopla Local Organizing Committee (LOC). "We have the opportunity to host one of the most exciting spectacles in sports while showcasing our region to fans from all over the world."

The First Four festivities began in earnest on March 12,

Selection Sunday, with the Hoopla 4 Miler, a four-mile run near UD Arena, followed by the FREE Hoopla STEM Challenge, championed by Chaminade Julianne Catholic High School, an interactive event for K-8th grade students that merges basketball and STEM education into a fun day of hands-on activities and demonstrations. The 12 winners get to take basketball shots at the arena

Tuesday in front of the First Four crowd. We also awarded the 2023 Hoopla STEM Teacher of the Year, an educational grant that is given annually to an outstanding local teacher.

The Big Hoopla's Mission is dedicated to supporting and honoring the Dayton region's large military community. Through the Hoopla Ticket Program, the organization has donated over 100,000 tickets to local military service members and students every year, giving them the unforgettable experience of attending the First Four games and other community events.

"Wright-Patterson Air Force Base is a huge part of our community," said Slaybaugh. "When The Big Hoopla was founded, it was clear that honoring our local heroes was an important part of our mission."

Along with ticket donations, The Big Hoopla also offers an annual Scholarship Program to active-duty military families, as well as Blue and Gold Star families. The Scholarship Program provides a grant that can be used for educational materials. Applications for the 2023 Scholarship will open April 1.

The 2023 First Four marks the 21st time that March Madness has tipped off at UD Arena in Dayton. The historic basketball venue is well-acquainted with the NCAA tournament as UD Arena has hosted over 120 NCAA tournament games, far more than any other venue in the world. Given this distinction, UD Arena has been dubbed "America's #1 Host Site."

A mix of familiar teams and newcomers make up the 2023 First Four field. Mississippi State, Nevada, Pittsburgh, and Southeast Missouri State will all make their first appearances at the First Four. College basketball fans will recognize some returning names, too: Texas Southern are making their third straight and sixth overall appearance, Arizona State and Fairleigh Dickinson return to Dayton for their third berths, and Texas A&M-Corpus Christi will visit UD Arena for a second straight season.

"Dayton is the epicenter of college basketball, and we can't wait to prove it again in 2023." Said Sarah Spees, Volunteer Director of the LOC.

#### About The Big Hoopla

The Big Hoopla is an Ohio non-profit corporation formed to organize all activities for the Dayton region in and around the [NCAA First Four](#) and the Division I Men's Basketball Tournament. The mission of its volunteer committee is to enlist community support for the NCAA First Four from small and large business, academic institutions, government, civic and community organizations as well as individuals across the fourteen-county Dayton region.

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