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## **County Mayor Kristin Jacobs Hosts Official Countdown Reception For The Bank of America World Youth Netball Championships 2005**

Broward County Mayor Kristin Jacobs will host an official Countdown Reception for the Bank of America World Youth Netball Championships 2005. The event will take place at on Tuesday, May 17, 5:30 p.m., at the Broward County Governmental Center, 115 S. Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale. This official celebration marks the eight-week countdown to the Fifth World Youth Netball Championships, which will be held July 21 to 31 at the Broward County Convention Center.

The Bank of America World Youth Netball Championships 2005 (WYNC2005) is one of the most important events in the history of netball and key in the history of U.S. Netball. It is the first International Federation of Netball Associations (IFNA) sanctioned netball event to be held in the United States since the 1890s, when Netball first came into existence.

"I'm pleased that Broward County has been chosen to host this event," said Mayor Jacobs. "Our County's rich history and cultural diversity brings us worldwide exposure. The Bank of America World Youth Netball Championship 2005 competition offers a great opportunity to learn about this popular sport and to see some of the best young players of the game compete."

"We are extremely excited to be the host nation for the Fifth World Youth Netball Championships," said City of Lauderdale Lakes Commissioner Hazelle Rogers. "This event is a historic milestone for the United States in our quest to put netball firmly on the sporting map and bring it back to its U.S. roots. We hope the Bank of America World Youth Netball Championships 2005 will bring even more visibility to this dynamic sport and help local clubs expand their numbers."

Netball originated in the United States as women's basketball and found its way to England more than 100 years ago. After a few misinterpretations of the rules, netball as it is known today was born. Its popularity quickly spread through the British Commonwealth Countries. Today the fiercest teams hail from New Zealand, Australia, Jamaica, South Africa and England. Netball is similar to basketball with the exception of

two things: there is no backboard and you cannot run with the ball. It is a fast-paced game of jumping, passing and shooting.

“We are very honored to host the first international netball competition held in the United States. Greater Fort Lauderdale is the perfect location for the event,” said Albert Tucker, Vice President Multicultural Business Development for the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau. “Our community is a mosaic of cultures and ethnicities, and we embrace this opportunity to showcase our destination to the world.”

Netball is not totally foreign to the U.S.; it is increasing in popularity. Like cricket, netball has made its way back to the U.S. through the immigrants who have relocated to the U.S. As netball’s popularity grows, several school systems have introduced the sport into their physical education programs. There is a high concentration of netball clubs in Florida, New York, Texas, California and Georgia.

Twenty countries will be competing for the coveted title of World Champion. The participating countries are: Antigua & Barbuda, Australia, Barbados, Bermuda, Botswana, Canada, Cook Islands, England, Fiji, Jamaica, Malaysia, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Samoa, Scotland, South Africa, St. Lucia, Trinidad & Tobago, United States of America, and Wales.

“The 2005 Championships is the largest under-21 championships in history. We have more than doubled the number of entrants since the last championships,” said Commissioner Rogers.

The Bank of America World Youth Netball Championships 2005 has been embraced and supported by several municipalities in Broward County including: Lauderdale Lakes, Miramar, Lauderhill, Oakland Park, Pembroke Pines, Pembroke Park, Plantation, and North Lauderdale.

Other corporate partners include: Bank of America; The Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau; Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center; North Broward Hospital District; Broward Sheriff’s Office; Broward Center for the Performing Arts; City of Lauderdale Lakes; City of Lauderhill; City of Miramar; Lauderdale Marketplace; Florida Sports Foundation; VISIT FLORIDA; Waste Management; Jamaica National; Victoria Mutual Building Society; Comcast; Amera Corporation; Medical Communication Specialists, Inc.; and WAVS 1170 AM Radio.

The countdown reception will feature members of the United States of America Under 21 squad who will be competing in the championships in July, as well as members from the Caribbean Consular core and local elected officials.

To learn more about the Bank of America World Youth Netball Championships 2005, visit [www.wync2005.com](http://www.wync2005.com).

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