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SIGN ON! LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS AND BUSINESSES TO WELCOME 2009 NCAA® MEN'S FINAL FOUR®

DETROIT (Jan. 29, 2009) – Welcome messages for the 2009 NCAA® Men's Final Four® will soon fill local highways and streets in preparation for upwards of 70,000 basketball fans from across the nation descending on Detroit April 4-6.

In response to a hospitality initiative of the Detroit Local Organizing Committee (DLOC), more than 25 local businesses and organizations have signed on to add Final Four messages to their electronic signboards throughout downtown Detroit and surrounding areas, such as Dearborn and Royal Oak. Any additional businesses or organizations that want to participate are encouraged to contact the DLOC for official NCAA messages that can be displayed on outdoor signs.

“We want to show the NCAA and the fans that Detroit welcomes the basketball world to our hometown,” said Christopher Ilitch, CEO of Ilitch Holdings and chair of the Final Four DLOC Hospitality Committee. “We know from previous major sporting events in Detroit that a great way to welcome fans is through grassroots support from the local business and civic community. We currently have commitments from more than 25 high-visibility signs in the area, and we expect to have many more in the area from venue electronic signs to local gas stations, restaurants and corner stores welcoming our visitors to Detroit for the 2009 NCAA Men's Final Four.”

Businesses or organizations can contact the DLOC at info@detroitloc.org or by calling 313-262-2900.

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About the NCAA

The NCAA is a membership-led nonprofit association of colleges and universities committed to supporting academic and athletics opportunities for more than 400,000 student-athletes at more than 1,000 member colleges and universities. Each year, more than 54,000 student-athletes compete in NCAA championships in Divisions I, II and III sports. Visit www.ncaa.org and www.ncaa.com for more details about the Association, its goals and members and corporate partnerships that help support programs for student-athletes.

The NCAA is proud to have the following elite companies as official Corporate Champions-AT&T, Coca-Cola and Pontiac-and the following elite companies as official Corporate Partners- Enterprise, Hershey's, The Hartford, Lowe's, Sheraton and State Farm.

About the 2009 NCAA® Division I Men's Basketball Championship

The 2009 NCAA Men's Final Four will take place at Ford Field in Detroit April 4 and 6. The final rounds of the championship bring together the four semifinalists of the single elimination tournament of the top 65 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball teams in the country. The event is expected to create a direct economic impact of \$30-50 million and attract approximately 70,000 visitors to Detroit. For information, visit www.ncaa.com/finalfour or call the Detroit Local Organizing Committee at 313-262-2900.

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