



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State's best tennis players to hit Abilene courts

ABILENE, Texas – Abilene will be in full swing this week with the state's best youth tennis players. Abilene Tennis Association partners with United States Tennis Association-Texas to host the Texas Slam Tennis Championship, the nation's largest junior tennis competition, June 8-16, at courts throughout the city.

The ACVB estimates 2700 people will visit Abilene during the nine-day event, including 1041 players, fans, families, coaches and officials. Matches will take place at 100 tennis courts, including middle and high schools, city parks and university courts.

Championship Finals will take place June 14-15 at Abilene Christian University. The public is invited to watch these top-notch athletes. Admission is free. The tournament roster and schedule can be found at the TennisLink on thetxslam.com.

Abilene faced off with other Texas communities to host the competition for a three-year term, and this year concludes that contract. The Abilene Tennis Association and Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau have bid to host the event another three years, and USTA-Texas will announce the winning host city later this month. Local tennis fans and businesses have pitched in to underwrite the tournament, knowing it's an important event for tennis lovers and local business.

"This is one of Abilene's largest events in terms of economic impact" said ACVB Executive Director Nanci Liles. "These nine days will bring \$1.3 million to local business, \$4 million over three years. It's economic development at its best."

This weekend through next, Abilene will host 14 meetings, conventions and events with an influx of \$3.3 million out of town dollars coming into our city. The ACVB is hoping Abilene will serve with love this week – showing West Texas hospitality to the groups.

"Hotels, restaurant and business personnel are wearing welcome buttons and we encourage everyone to join us and roll out the welcome mat," Liles said. "If you have an electronic sign we ask you to 'Welcome Texas Slam Players.' or call us to deliver buttons for employees to wear. It makes an impression and we want to host this prestigious event for three more years."

"We want to underscore our strong support for hosting the Texas Slam in Abilene," said ATA President Kevin Crousen. "Other cities are lining up to snatch this tournament when our contract is up, but we want to enjoy the home court advantage. We value the economic impact, but hosting this tournament gives our local up-and-coming players a chance to watch competitive tennis in top form. It gets everyone excited about tennis. That's a win-win."

The ATA can still accept volunteers. Folks who sign up for a shift, a full day or the entire event will get a keepsake Texas Slam T-shirt, as well as the chance to watch some great matches. To volunteer, contact Volunteer Committee Chair Susan Clark at skcintx@hotmail.com or 325-513-7233.

Located in the T & P Depot landmark downtown, the Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau leverages local hotel tax into economic development. The ACVB's tourism professionals harness the latest travel trends, research and strategies to bring group and leisure visitors to Abilene. Travelers to the Abilene MSA spent \$455 million last fiscal year, bringing happy people to stay in local hotels, shop, dine, and enjoy sports, arts and attractions. Established as an affiliate of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce in 1970, the bureau has improved the quality of life and enhanced the Abilene visitor experience for nearly 50 years.