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Rocky Mount to Host 47th CIAA Volleyball Championship, Showcasing Eastern North Carolina as a Premier Sports Tourism Destination

November 9–11 championship brings collegiate athletics to downtown Rocky Mount as the region builds on millions in estimated economic impact.

ROCKY MOUNT, N.C. (October 2026) – The road to the championship leads to Rocky Mount this November as the Rocky Mount Event Center prepares to host the 47th Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Volleyball Championship, November 9–11, 2026.

Eight of the conference's top collegiate volleyball teams will compete for the championship title, bringing student-athletes, coaches, conference representatives, alumni, families and fans to Eastern North Carolina for three days of championship-level competition.

Founded in 1912, the CIAA is the nation's oldest historically Black athletic conference and a cornerstone of collegiate athletics for more than a century. Hosting the championship connects Rocky Mount to that distinguished legacy while strengthening the region's growing reputation as a destination for major sporting events.

The championship will take place at the 165,000-square-foot Rocky Mount Event Center in the heart of downtown Rocky Mount, providing an opportunity for residents and visitors to experience collegiate volleyball while supporting the local community.

“The CIAA is thrilled to bring our Volleyball Championship to Rocky Mount!” said Jacqie McWilliams-Parker, Commissioner of the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA)**.** “We appreciate the city’s partnership and warm hospitality as we celebrate the incredible talent of our student-athletes and the spirit of CIAA athletics. We look forward to an exciting championship that brings our fans and communities together and creates lasting memories. Thank you, Rocky Mount, for welcoming the CIAA family!”

"Hosting the CIAA Volleyball Championship is a significant moment for Rocky Mount and our entire region. It reflects the confidence major collegiate athletic organizations are placing in our facility, our team, and our community," said David L. Joyner, General Manager of the Rocky Mount Event Center. "Beyond the competition, this is about creating meaningful economic opportunities for local businesses, strengthening our position in the sports tourism industry, and demonstrating that Eastern North Carolina is capable of

hosting championship-level events. We are proud to welcome the CIAA and look forward to delivering an exceptional experience for its student-athletes, coaches, and supporters."

A Championship with Regional Economic Impact

The significance of hosting the championship extends beyond the volleyball court. With visiting teams, conference representatives and supporters expected to utilize area hotels, restaurants, retailers and other businesses, the event presents another opportunity to stimulate tourism activity throughout Nash and Edgecombe counties.

"We are excited to partner with the Rocky Mount Event Center in welcoming the CIAA Volleyball Championship to Rocky Mount. Bringing an event of this caliber to our community is a tremendous opportunity to showcase our destination while supporting our local hotels, restaurants, and businesses," said Barbara Green Brabham, TMP, Executive Director of Nash County Travel & Tourism. "Beyond the economic benefits, we see this championship as an opportunity to introduce new visitors to everything our area has to offer, build lasting relationships, and open the door to future sporting events. We look forward to making the teams, families, and fans feel welcome and giving them plenty of reasons to return."

The championship builds on another significant year for the Rocky Mount Event Center, which continues to attract sporting tournaments, conventions, corporate gatherings and community events that contribute to the regional economy.

In calendar year 2025, the Event Center reported an estimated economic impact of $31.8 million. For 2026, the venue has generated an estimated $27.3 million in economic impact to date, representing approximately 86 percent of its previous full-year total, with additional events scheduled through the remainder of the year.

The facility has also hosted 24 sporting tournaments and 63 catering events in 2026, reflecting continued demand for its athletic facilities, meeting spaces and event services.

These figures demonstrate the broader economic significance of attracting tournaments, conferences and events that bring visitors to Rocky Mount and encourage spending throughout the surrounding region.

A Regional Welcome for the CIAA

Preparations are underway to create a welcoming experience for the participating institutions, student-athletes and visitors.

CIAA representatives are scheduled to begin arriving Saturday, November 7, followed by participating teams on Sunday, November 8, creating additional opportunities for visitor activity ahead of the championship.

The Rocky Mount Event Center is working with tourism and community partners to encourage businesses across Nash and Edgecombe counties to participate in welcoming championship visitors.

Restaurants, retailers, hotels and other local establishments are being encouraged to showcase their hospitality through special promotions, extended hours, storefront displays and social media engagement.

The championship's promotional campaign, **#RoadToRockyMount**, is building anticipation leading up to the competition, while **#WeMadeItToTheMount** will celebrate the arrival of participating teams and supporters.

The championship also highlights the Event Center's continued efforts to attract high-profile sporting events while building relationships with collegiate athletic organizations, national event rights holders and regional tourism partners.

With a year-round calendar of youth sporting tournaments, collegiate competitions, conferences and community programming, the facility continues to position Rocky Mount and the surrounding region as a competitive destination for sports, meetings and entertainment.

For the Twin Counties, the CIAA Volleyball Championship represents more than three days of competition. It is an opportunity to celebrate collegiate athletics, introduce new visitors to Eastern North Carolina, support local businesses and build momentum for future championship events.

As preparations continue, the message from Rocky Mount is clear: **The stage is set, the community is ready, and the road to the CIAA Volleyball Championship ends in Rocky Mount.**

Championship Information

Event: 47th CIAA Volleyball Championship
Dates: November 9–11, 2026
Location: Rocky Mount Event Center
Address: 285 NE Main Street, Rocky Mount, NC 27801
Admission: Free to the public [Pending final CIAA confirmation]

For additional information about the championship and upcoming events, visit **RockyMountEvents.com**.

Booking & Inquiries

Sports tournaments: rmeceventsales@rockymountevents.com
Conferences, weddings, social and group events: cgreen@rockymountevents.com
Sponsorships and advertising: apittman@rockymountevents.com

About Rocky Mount Event Center

The Rocky Mount Event Center is a four-time ConventionSouth Readers' Choice Award winner, a 2025 Stella Silver Award winner, and has been recognized among the top three volleyball venues in the nation. The 165,000-square-foot facility in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, hosts sporting events, conventions, corporate meetings, community celebrations and private functions.

Owned by the City of Rocky Mount and operated by The Sports Facilities Companies, the Event Center is a member of the SF Network, a national network of sports and recreation facilities. Through championship-level facilities, professional event management and a commitment to exceptional guest experiences, the Rocky Mount Event Center continues to support sports tourism and economic development throughout Eastern North Carolina.

For more information, visit **RockyMountEvents.com**.

About The Sports Facilities Companies

The Sports Facilities Companies (SFC) provides planning, development and management services for sports, recreation, wellness and event facilities across the United States. Through its integrated network of facilities and professional management services, SFC supports communities in developing destinations that promote economic activity, recreation and meaningful guest experiences.

For more information, visit **SportsFacilities.com**.

About the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association

Founded in 1912, the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) is the nation's oldest historically Black athletic conference and an NCAA Division II conference. The CIAA has a distinguished legacy of athletic achievement, academic excellence and leadership development, bringing together historically Black colleges and universities through competitive intercollegiate athletics.

For more information, visit **TheCIAA.com**.