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For Immediate Release –



## **FISCAL YEAR END REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING JUNE 30, 2014** *MILLIONS INVESTED TO IMPROVE GUEST EXPERIENCE*

**OMAHA, Neb.** – As the Metropolitan Entertainment & Convention Authority (MECA) enters its 12<sup>th</sup> year of operation the focus is on reinvesting in the facility to ensure CenturyLink Center Omaha remains among the most successful venues in the country.

CenturyLink Center Omaha welcomed 1.1 million guests through its doors in fiscal 2013-14. Sold out concerts George Strait, Justin Timberlake, and Bruno Mars, a successful Creighton basketball season and a World Championship boxing match were just some of the events that contributed to the solid attendance numbers. More than 13 million people have visited the CenturyLink Center since it opened in 2003 and the facility was just ranked as one of the top 100 stadium experiences in 2014 by *Stadium Journey* magazine.

Due to fewer major sporting events and added expenditures to maintain and upgrade the facility, profits were lower than in the previous fiscal year. Consolidated net profit for the fiscal year was \$3.3 million before depreciation and amortization and \$519,000 after depreciation and amortization.

MECA spent \$9 million in fiscal 2013-14 to make needed updates and improvements to the 11-year-old facility. MECA completed installation of a new, fully High Definition (HD) arena scoreboard and video control system, refreshed concession stands and a completely remodeled Club Lounge rebranded as the Lexus Club. Other projects included resurfacing the basketball floor, repairing the concrete in Lot D, and repainting exterior stair towers. The projects continue in the current fiscal year as MECA is currently refurbishing the air walls and upgrading the acoustics in the convention center meeting rooms to provide clients the best possible sound quality for their meetings.

“Improving the fan experience while attracting marquee events is our number one goal,” said MECA President and CEO Roger Dixon. “To remain one of the most successful venues in the country, in the midst of added regional competition, we will continue to work hard to keep this facility state-of-the-art”.

TD Ameritrade Park Omaha was voted #14 in the Top 100 2014 stadium experiences in the country by *Stadium Journey* magazine. A successful Creighton University baseball season, record-breaking Big Ten Baseball Tournament in May, the fourth NCAA Men’s College World Series in June, and the inaugural FXFL football season made for an exciting year. The CWS again broke its attendance record welcoming an historic 361,740 fans. MECA is excited to host the first Big East Baseball Championship at TD Ameritrade Park Omaha in May 2015 with Creighton University. TD Ameritrade Park Omaha is also the chosen venue for the Big Ten Baseball Tournament in 2016 and 2018 based on a very successful performance in 2014.

Looking ahead, there are number of highly sought after events that chose Omaha and CenturyLink Center Omaha. The NCAA brings March Madness back to Omaha with the NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball Tournament 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Rounds on March 20-22. CenturyLink Center Omaha will host the FIVB World Grand Prix Volleyball Finals this summer and the NCAA Division I Women’s Volleyball Final Four in December. The U.S. Olympic Swim Trials are back in 2016 and will be followed by the 2017 Equestrian Show Jumping and Dressage World Cups and the 2018 NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball Regional.

### **About Us**

The Metropolitan Entertainment & Convention Authority (MECA) is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization that builds and manages public event venues in Omaha, Nebraska. The formal operations of MECA commenced on August 25, 2000 with the signing of a 99-year Lease and Development Agreement with the City of Omaha. The cost to build CenturyLink Center Omaha was \$291 million, funded through a public-private arrangement. The private sector contributed \$75 million and the public sector contributed \$216 million. CenturyLink Center Omaha opened in 2003.

In consideration of this unprecedented level of private support for a public arena, the 99-year agreement assigned MECA to exclusively operate the Facilities at its discretion. MECA is governed by a board of five appointed, independent directors and managed by a dedicated management team. Board members are appointed by the City of Omaha with appointments rotating between the City Council and the Mayor.

Another public-private arrangement was completed to create a new home for the College World Series. In 2009, MECA broke ground on TD Ameritrade Park Omaha, which opened in 2011. The stadium is home to the NCAA Division I Men's College World Series, the Creighton Bluejays men's baseball team, and host to numerous other events.

According to a recent economic study, CenturyLink Center Omaha has generated nearly \$5 billion in economic benefit for Omaha. The study indicated that taxpayers have not had to pay for the operations of CenturyLink Center Omaha. The proceeds from the economic benefits of CenturyLink Center Omaha received by the City of Omaha have exceeded the cost of the related bond debt. As a result, taxpayers have not been burdened with the cost of CenturyLink Center Omaha, which is a rarity in arena and convention facilities in the U.S.

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