



## **2014 Gay Games will include opportunities for LGBT businesses**

Cleveland, OH (September 2013)—The National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) and the 2014 Gay Games are excited to announce their agreement to make 2014 the most inclusive Gay Games ever.

The Gay Games presented by the Cleveland Foundation will happen Aug. 9-16, 2014, in Cleveland and Akron, Ohio. For the first time, the Gay Games is making a commitment to a fully inclusive supply chain.

Not only will these games promote participation of LGBT athletes and artists and entertain more than tens of thousands of people, the Gay Games will actively buy back from LGBT-owned businesses.

“We’re proud to enter into this historic memorandum of understanding with the Gay Games,” said Justin Nelson, NGLCC president and co-founder. “We must be thoughtful and deliberate to ensure that LGBT-owned business have access to every opportunity to bid on contracts, vendor, and service opportunities. The Games will have an immediate and long term economic impact in Cleveland and so will the growth of each and every LGBT owned company that will do business with the 2014 Gay Games. NGLCC and our local affiliate chamber, Plexus will hard to ensure our certified suppliers (LGBTBEs) are fully engaged with all the business opportunities represented by these games.”

Plexus is involved in this initiative with the NGLCC and the Gay Games. The groups are all working together to create significant local economic impact by making sure certified LGBT business enterprises (LGBTBES) have an opportunity to be a part of this historic event.

Michelle Tomallo, president-elect of Plexus, said the Gay Games illustrates the impact of the LGBT community on the economy. “It’s a great opportunity to spotlight the importance of supplier diversity and to show how LGBT events and LGBT-owned businesses are an integral part of the region’s economic engine,” she said.

In 2014, the Games expect to bring in an estimated 10,000 participants, as well as an additional 20,000 guests, performers, spectators and volunteers. Next year’s events will include more than 35 sports and cultural events. Altogether, the Gay Games is expected to have an economic impact of almost \$58 million to the Cleveland and Akron region.

Tom Nobbe, executive director of the 2014 Gay Games, says he is pleased to see the event act as a catalyst for the region and believes Plexus and NGLCC’s involvement are instrumental to making the Games a great success. “The Gay Games are about more than athletics and competition. It’s the LGBT community and its allies coming together to celebrate inclusion on all levels, and we strongly believe inclusion of LGBT-owned businesses is instrumental to that,” he says.

Learn more about LGBT Business Enterprise Certification at <http://www.nglcc.org/get-certified>.



For more information on how to get involved in Gay Games planning and business opportunities, contact Esha Hand at [ehand@GG9CLE.com](mailto:ehand@GG9CLE.com) or visit the Gay Games Supplier Diversity Page on the website: <http://www.gg9cle.com/gay-games/supplier-diveristy-program/>.

#### **About NGLCC**

The National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) is the only national not-for-profit advocacy organization dedicated to expanding the economic opportunities and advancements of LGBT business community. With more than 29,000 members, 140 corporate partners, and 51 local, state, and international affiliate chambers, NGLCC is the largest LGBT business development and economic advocacy organization in the world. For more information, visit [www.NGLCC.org](http://www.NGLCC.org).

#### **About Plexus**

Plexus, the LGBT and Allied Chamber of Commerce, is a nonprofit organization serving the LGBT business community, promoting supplier diversity, and advocating workplace equality issues in Northeast Ohio. Plexus is a strategic partner in the economic development of Northeast Ohio and serves as a point of connection for corporations, supporters, LGBT businesses and professionals. For more information, visit [www.thinkplexus.org](http://www.thinkplexus.org).

#### **About Gay Games**

The Gay Games are an international sporting and cultural event held every four years. Launched in 1982, the Games invite participation from all competitors regardless of sexual orientation, race, gender, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, political beliefs, athletic or artistic ability, age, physical challenge or health status. They are open to anyone 18 years or older. About 10 percent of participants are from outside the LGBT community.

The 2014 Gay Games presented by the Cleveland Foundation will be August 9-16, 2014, in venues around Cleveland and Akron, Ohio, in the United States. More than 35 sports and culture event competitions will be held, with more than 11,000 participants expected to join the medal race. For more information, visit [www.gg9cle.com](http://www.gg9cle.com).