



PRESS RELEASE

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Florida Region Announces \$100,000 Financial Support for USA Volleyball Beach ParaVolley.

Through a generous donation by the Norelli Family Foundation, USA Volleyball Beach ParaVolley will get a jump start in 2021!

Eustis, FL – January 18, 2021 – The Florida Region of USA Volleyball is proud to announce a \$100,000 private donation from the Norelli Family Foundation to support USAV Beach ParaVolley (BPV) programming at Hickory Point Beach in Tavares, FL for the 2021-2024 quad. Additionally, the Florida Region is also pleased to announce that Hickory Point Beach (HPB) will become a National Training Site for the USA Volleyball BPV program.

Beach ParaVolley is an emerging sport as recognized by World ParaVolley (WPV). WPV is recognized by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) as the sole International Federation responsible for all forms of volleyball for persons with a physical impairment. BPV consists of three member teams and works within the Paralympic classification system.

In 2019, USA Volleyball announced that they would become the National Federation for the sport of BPV in the US. Later in 2019, the inaugural USA BPV teams medaled at the WPV World Championships event in Pingtan, China. The USA women earned Silver and the USA men earned Gold in their first international competition and currently hold the #2 and #1 BPV world ranking, respectively.

USA Volleyball president and CEO **Jamie Davis** stated, “The growth of Beach ParaVolley is a huge priority for USAV as this new discipline expands globally. As the US National Federation for BPV, our goal is to provide state of the art facilities where our athletes can train in their pursuit for gold. We are grateful to the Florida Region and the Norelli Family Foundation for their generous support in helping our athletes achieve their dreams.”

The grant funding being provided for USAV BPV will be provided by the Norelli Family Foundation (NFF). NFF has supported the Florida Region of USAV scholarship program since 2015 and provides 4-year scholarships and matching dollars for numerous private scholarships for high school seniors each year. Since coming alongside the Florida Region, the NFF has generously provided almost \$300,000 in scholarship funds.

The President of the Norelli Family Foundation, **Joe Norelli** said “We are honored to support this worthy cause and provide some seed funding for the USAV BPV program. In November of 2020, I had the privilege of watching the [BPV] athletes train and compete at the FL Pro Best of the Beach event and was impressed with their determination and dedication to the sport. With a first-class venue like HPB and some additional BPV program funding, I look forward to seeing Team USA become a world-leader in this sport.”

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Through a public-private partnership with Lake County, FL, the Florida Region of USAV opened the 21-court HPB sand volleyball complex in 2014. In 2019 the 4,000sf Athletic Center building was opened with many amenities to improve the experience for athletes and fans that visit the complex. Since opening the venue, athletes and fans from 14 countries, 25 states in the US and over 90 cities across Florida have journeyed to HPB in Tavares, FL for beach volleyball.

Brandon Matulka, the Executive Director for the agency that oversees the tourism division in Lake County, FL (VisitLakeFL.com) commented on HPB becoming the national training site for USAV BPV, “Lake County is both extremely proud and excited to become a national training site for USAV Beach ParaVolley. Since the inception of the Hickory Point Beach facility, we have strived to work hand in hand with our partners like the Florida Region of USA Volleyball, to create and provide tremendous opportunities like this to athletes and our community. While we have already experienced great successes at the facility to date, we hope that this landmark designation helps to not only continue the growth and success of the sport, but also demonstrates Lake County’s commitment to it.”

Future plans for HPB will add sidewalks around the courts improving access directly to the playing sand for all attendees (able-bodied and disabled). The future enhancements are scheduled to take place in the late-Summer of 2021.

Steve Bishop, the Executive Director and President for the Florida Region of USA Volleyball added, “This is great news for Hickory Point Beach and for the sport of volleyball. We are blessed to have the Norelli Family on our team and now their generosity will be extended to another part of our extended volleyball family with the support of USAV Beach ParaVolley. I anticipate that this will open doors for us to host international beach volleyball events as BPV moves toward consideration for the 2028 Paralympic Games in Los Angeles. We look forward to this upcoming quad and sharing more exciting news as other opportunities develop.”

About Florida Region of USA Volleyball:

The Florida Region of USA Volleyball is a 501c3 non-profit that began operations in the 1960’s and was officially incorporated in 1982 to promote the sport of volleyball and to create competitive playing opportunities for volleyball enthusiasts of all ages throughout the State of Florida. The Florida Region is one of the 40 regional volleyball associations under the umbrella of USA Volleyball and currently serves 14,500 members. Indoor and outdoor programming is available for adults, juniors, coaches and officials. The Florida Region of USA Volleyball is headquartered in Eustis, FL and manages the 21-court Hickory Point Beach Sand Volleyball Complex in Tavares, FL. Additional information on the Florida Region can be found at: www.FloridaVolleyball.org.

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For additional information contact:

Ashlie Fox, Marketing Coordinator

Florida Region of USA Volleyball, Inc.

t: (352) 742-0080 e: ashlie@floridavolleyball.org