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North Carolina 2015 Launches "Simply Stunning" Campaign
Winter Olympics Heighten Interest in Figure Skating

GREENSBORO, N.C. (FEBRUARY 27, 2014) – Building on the momentum from the Sochi Winter Olympics, North Carolina 2015, Local Organizing Committee for the 2015 U.S. Figure Skating Championships, is launching a new advertising campaign called "Simply Stunning" to promote the 2015 U.S. Championships in January in Greensboro. The campaign, developed by Winston-Salem-based Vela Strategic Marketing and Public Relations, had a soft launch during the Sochi Games in The News & Record, Diamond Media & Marketing Partner of the 2015 U.S. Figure Skating Championships. The Campaign will formally debut in national and Piedmont Triad print media outlets in March and will continue throughout 2014 and early next year.

"As we began work on the campaign last fall, we stepped back and visualized a new concept about figure skating that would resonate with people and engage them in the sport. Our team wanted the campaign to be informational and to generate instant excitement," Ginger Gallagher, Vela's vice president of account management and business operations, said. "The result is the Simply Stunning campaign, which we believe will attract the attention of fans as it showcases the incredible intricacy of figure skating."

Unlike traditional figure skating advertising campaigns that often feature the talent of specific skaters, Simply Stunning focuses on the athleticism of the sport, including jumps, twist, spins and the skates themselves. One of the first in a series of Simply Stunning ads has a heading called "The Skate" followed by an engaging description of the four millimeter wide steel blades and metal teeth found on figure skates.

"After attending several sessions of the 2011 U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Greensboro, we saw how incredible and demanding the sport of figure skating is," Michelle Soyars, Vela's vice president of creative strategy, said. "No one can truly appreciate figure skating until you see it up close and in person. We believe the Simply Stunning campaign does justice to the sport and celebrates how amazing it truly is."

Gallagher and Soyars said the initial part of the Simply Stunning campaign is devoted to print media but likely will be extended to include television, online, radio and outdoor advertising in coming months.

"We at Vela were honored to have been chosen to develop this campaign on behalf of North Carolina 2015 and the U.S. Figure Skating Championships," Gallagher added. "A number of major sponsors

have stepped up to demonstrate their support for North Carolina 2015, and we at Vela are thrilled to be included among them. I'm a big figure skating fan myself, and I think it's amazing that the Figure Skating Championships are returning to North Carolina for a second time in four years."

Soyars said that the design staff at Vela has worked with U.S. Figure Skating for the past several months to gather the images and facts that are part of the Simply Stunning campaign. She added that officials with U.S. Figure Skating were extremely helpful during the development phase of the campaign and are pleased with its outcome.

"We hope the images and words in the Simply Stunning ads make people want to come to Greensboro to see the best figure skaters in the country," Soyars added. "However, you don't have to be a skating fan to appreciate what figure skaters do in terms of sheer athleticism. Anyone who comes to the U.S. Figure Skating Championships next January will enjoy the spectacle, beauty, and celebrity."

About the 2015 U.S. Figure Skating Championships

The 2015 U.S. Figure Skating Championships will take place January 18 to 25, 2015 with practice day for the skaters on Saturday, January 17, and competition beginning Sunday, January 18 through Sunday, January 25. The Championships conclude with the Skating Spectacular on Sunday evening, January 25. At the 2015 U.S. Figure Skating Championships, national champions will be selected in Ladies, Men, Pairs, and Ice Dance at the Senior, Junior, Novice, Intermediate and Juvenile levels. For only the third time in the 100-year history of the event, the 2015 U.S. Figure Skating Championships will feature the three major components of the Championships—competition, practice and FanFest—all in one building, under one roof.

About North Carolina 2015

North Carolina 2015 is the local organizing committee for the 2015 U.S. Figure Skating Championships to be held in Greensboro, NC, January 18-25, 2015. NC 2015 encompasses a collaborative team consisting of the Greensboro Coliseum Complex, the Greensboro Sports Commission, the Greensboro Convention & Visitors Bureau, Sports & Properties, Inc., and North Carolina Figure Skating Clubs. The 2015 U.S. Figure Skating Championships are sponsored locally by BB&T and VF Corporation, Presenting Sponsors; and by Official Sponsors the Greensboro Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Greensboro Coliseum Complex, the Joseph M. Bryan Foundation, Graphic Visual Solutions, BEM, Vela, The City of Greensboro, The Cemala Foundation, Ice Rink Events, HKS, Exact Target, and Hagan Davis Law Firm; by Media Partners The News & Record, WFMY News2, Clear Channel Media + Entertainment, and Guilford Woman Magazine; and by Medical Services Provider Cone Health.

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