

# NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **HOUSTON FIGURE SKATING CLUB AND TEXAS GULF COAST FIGURE SKATING CLUB TO HOST 2009 MIDWESTERN SECTIONAL FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS SKATERS COMPETING FOR CHANCE AT U.S. CHAMPIONSHIPS IN JANUARY**

**Houston, Texas (October 7, 2008)** – The 2009 Midwest Sectional Figure Skating Championships, hosted by the Houston Figure Skating Club (HFSC) and the Texas Gulf Coast Figure Skating Club (TGCFSC), will take place Nov. 11-15, 2009 at the Sugar Land Ice & Sports Center (SLISC). The event will feature approximately 300 local-area competitors from 17 states: Alabama, Arizona, California, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee and Wisconsin.

The road to the U.S. Championships each year, and to the Olympic Winter Games every four years, begins with the U.S. Figure Skating qualifying structure of regional and sectional events. The structure is comprised of nine regional events and three sectional events (see chart below for clarification). Skaters who place in the top four at a regional competition qualify for either a sectional (novice, junior and senior) or the U.S. Junior Championships (juvenile and intermediate); skaters who place in the top four at a sectional qualify for the U.S. Championships.

“The Houston/Sugar Land area is very lucky to have the chance to host this event,” said 2009 Midwest Sectional co-chairs Tracy Scholz and Connie Calbat-Adams. “It is rare that the local community has the chance to experience Olympic-caliber skating.

“Few people know how big figure skating is in the Houston area. This is the perfect opportunity for our community to showcase the wonderful skating resources we have right here at home.”

The regional championships, from which this event’s competitors will be decided, take place Oct. 10-14 in various regions throughout the country. Champions of the sport who have competed in Midwest Sectionals over the years include Evan Lysacek and Katy Taylor.

The event is open to the general public. Ticket purchasing information and a tentative schedule of events will be posted on the event web site, [www.mids2009.org](http://www.mids2009.org), as soon as it is available.

U.S. Figure Skating is the national governing body for the sport of figure skating in the United States as recognized by the United States Olympic Committee and the International Skating Union. U.S. Figure Skating is comprised of approximately 1,425 member clubs and Basic Skills programs representing nearly 180,000 members. U.S. Figure Skating is charged with the development of the sport on all levels within the United States, including athletes, officials, sanctioning of events and exhibitions, and establishing the rules and guidelines by which the sport is governed.

Continued on next page

**U.S. FIGURE SKATING QUALIFYING STRUCTURE OF EVENTS**

<b>SECTIONS</b>		
Pacific Coast	Midwestern	Eastern
<b>*REGIONS</b>		
<b><u>Northwest Pacific</u></b> AK, ID, MT, OR, WA, WY	<b><u>Eastern Great Lakes</u></b> AL, IN, KY, LP of MI, MS, OH, TN	<b><u>New England</u></b> CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT
<b><u>Central Pacific</u></b> CA (Visalia & north), HI, NV, UT	<b><u>Southwestern Region</u></b> AR, CO, KS, LA, NE, NM, OK, TX	<b><u>North Atlantic</u></b> NJ, NY
<b><u>Southwest Pacific</u></b> AZ, CA (south of Visalia)	<b><u>Upper Great Lakes</u></b> IL, IA, UP of MI, MN, MO, ND, SD, WI	<b><u>South Atlantic</u></b> DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, PA, SD, VA, WV

*\*Exceptions: Las Vegas, NV, in Southwest Pacific; Chattanooga, TN, in South Atlantic; Greater Kansas City Area & St. Joseph, MO, in Southwestern; Erie, PA, in North Atlantic*

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For additional information, please contact Molly Gorny at 832.660.5249, or mbgorny@yahoo.com. Media wishing to attend the competition may also contact Molly for information about interview opportunities and promotional tickets to the event.