

## **Choice Hotels Inks 3-Year Deal with Little League Baseball Official Hotel Partner**

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Worldwide lodging franchisor Choice Hotels International today announced the signing of a three-year agreement to become the Official Hotel Partner of, beginning with the 2003 baseball season.

Under the terms of the agreement, Choice Hotels' Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Quality, Clarion, Sleep Inn, Econo Lodge, MainStay Suites and Rodeway Inn brand hotels will be promoted exclusively to the Little League Baseball (LLB) audience, which travels extensively on an annual basis. In addition, Choice Hotels will receive exclusive right and license for use of the LLB Marks including the Little League logos and "Team Dugout" characters, acknowledgement on the "Sponsor's Page" on the LLB web site, tickets to the Little League World Series and advertisements in the Divisional World Series programs.

"Little League Baseball is extremely pleased to have Choice Hotels as a partner," said Stephen D. Keener, president and chief executive officer of Little League Baseball, Incorporated. "Hundreds of thousands of Little League parents must bear the expense of travel each year. Our partnership with Choice Hotels will guarantee the entire Little League extended family of parents, friends and volunteers will have access to excellent lodging at a significant discount."

Choice Hotels will provide Little League Baseball and its participants with a centralized telephone number for hotel reservations and discounted room rates at over 3,300 properties throughout the United States and Canada.

"Little League Baseball's participants are the exact same family-oriented guests who stay in our hotels," said Wayne Wielgus, Choice Hotels' senior vice president of marketing. "We're looking forward to providing Little League teams and their fans with quality accommodations while they're on the road competing."

"Put simply, this deal is huge," said Brian Parker, director of sports marketing and sales for Choice Hotels. "Youth sports is a key target market for our business and we are now the official hotel partner of the largest youth sports organization the world."

Vision Sports and Entertainment Partners of Concord, Massachusetts was retained by Choice Hotels to assist in activating the partnership. Vision SEP will help execute a strategy that reaches Little League's key decision-makers at the grassroots level.

"I feel that that this will be a great partnership and my company is extremely excited to work on this project," said Bryant McBride, President and CEO of Vision Sports and Entertainment Partners.

Little League Baseball is the world's largest youth sports organization, with nearly 3 million players on 200,000 teams in all 50 states and 103 other countries. The Little League Baseball World Series will be held August 15-24 in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Choice Hotels International is one of the world's largest lodging franchisors, marketing more than 5,000 hotels open or under development in 39 countries under the Comfort Inn,

Comfort Suites, Quality, Clarion, Sleep Inn, MainStay Suites, Econo Lodge, and Rodeway Inn brand names. For more information on Choice, visit the company's web site at <http://www.choicehotels.com/> .

Choice Hotels, Choice Hotels International, Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Quality, Clarion, Sleep Inn, MainStay Suites, Econo Lodge, and Rodeway Inn are proprietary trademarks and service marks of Choice Hotels International.

SOURCE: Choice Hotels International

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