

MAYOR MITCH LANDRIEU AND NEW ORLEANS HORNETS TO HOST SOS NOLA MIDNIGHT BASKETBALL LEAGUE

NEW ORLEANS, LA—Today, Mayor Mitch Landrieu and New Orleans Hornets President Hugh Weber announced the launch of SOS NOLA Midnight Basketball, another initiative in the Mayor's SOS NOLA: Saving Our Sons campaign. Last September, the Mayor held a citywide Crime Action Summit with over 2,000 citizens in attendance and over 600 residents and leaders from the business, faith-based and nonprofit community committing to doing their part to help end the cycle of violent crime and murder in the City.

"We are grateful to the Hornets for committing to midnight basketball," said Mayor Mitch Landrieu. "This is not only a fun recreational activity for young men in New Orleans, but also part of a crime fighting strategy that steers people away from violence and into a safe, positive and competitive environment."

"We are thrilled to be collaborating with Mayor Landrieu on, what we feel, is a very important program," said Hornets President Hugh Weber. "Midnight Basketball gives the Hornets the opportunity to share our passion for basketball with young men in the New Orleans community, promotes the importance of health and fitness and also provides them with a safe place to develop as athletes and productive citizens."

The program will consist of a series of 5-on-5 tournaments from January 14 to March 17, 2012. Each tournament will follow the NCAA tournament style structure. Tournaments will take place every other Saturday beginning January 14 through March 17 at St. Bernard Center, 1500 Lafreniere Street, from 8:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m. SOS NOLA Midnight Basketball is free of charge and open to males over 18 years old.

The league will kick-off on Saturday, January 14 with Mayor Landrieu officiating the opening jump ball. The league will feature a DJ from Power 102.9 FM each night, with DJ Abe Chicken hosting the kick-off event.

Since the Crime Action Summit in September, over 3,000 citizens have answered the Mayor's call to action—to proactively invest in the lives of our young men to prevent lifestyles of violence - participating in Neighborhood Watch Trainings, Night Out Against Crime, and a Mentorship Orientation.

"This is going to take an all hands on deck effort," said Mayor Landrieu. "I know if we continue to work as one team, we will be successful."

More information and detailed rules for the tournament can be found at www.hornets.com and www.nola.gov/sosnola.