

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**RUPP ARENA PARTNERS WITH  
KULTURECITY TO BECOME SENSORY INCLUSIVE**

**Lexington, KY (December 2, 2022)** – Central Bank Center has partnered with KultureCity to make all future programs and events that the venue hosts to be sensory inclusive. This new initiative will promote an accommodating and positive experience for all guests and fans with a sensory issue that visits Central Bank Center, Rupp Arena or Lexington Opera House. The certification process entailed Central Bank Center staff being trained by leading medical

professionals on how to recognize those guests and fans with sensory needs and how to handle a sensory overload situation.



The first ‘wellness room’ will be located in Rupp Arena outside Section 30. The wellness room will be open for all arena events. The room will contain comfortable seating, an array of sensory items, weighted lap pads, and soft lighting.

“Partnering with KultureCity has been a priority for us as we want to ensure that Rupp Arena can provide an inclusive experience, and better welcome guests with autism or a sensory friendly processing disorders- whether it’s helping set expectations while planning a visit, or offering a quiet room to those who need it. It is vital to our overall guest experience that there are no boundaries, and that those of all abilities can experience all that Rupp Arena has to offer,”

Lindsey Abrahamson, Guest Experience Manager, Central Bank Center.

Sensory bags, equipped with noise canceling headphones (provided by Puro Sound Labs), fidget tools, verbal cue cards, and weighted lap pads will also be available to all guests at Central Bank Center who may feel overwhelmed by the environment. When locating a staff member, they will be wearing a blue Rupp Arena vest. Sensory bags/lap pads will be available to borrow from the Information Desk in the Main Lobby, and on the West Concourse. Additional Quiet Areas are located in the Arena Lobby. Sensory sensitivities or challenges with sensory regulation are often experienced by individuals with autism, dementia, PTSD and other similar conditions (1 in 6 individuals).

One of the major barriers for these individuals is sensitivity to over stimulation and noise, which is an enormous part of the environment in a venue like the Central Bank Center. With its new

certification, the Central Bank Center is now better prepared to assist guests with sensory sensitivities in having the most comfortable and accommodating experience possible when attending any event. Prior to attending an event, families can download the free KultureCity App where one can view what sensory features are available and where they can access them. Also, on the App is the Social Story which will provide a preview of what to expect while enjoying an event at Central Bank Center.

“Our communities are what shapes our lives and to know that the Central Bank Center willing to go the extra mile to ensure that everyone, no matter their ability, is included in their community is amazing. We’re honored to partner with Central Bank Center to provide a truly inclusive experience for all fans and guests!” Uma Srivastava, Executive Director, KultureCity. KultureCity is a leading non-profit recognized nationwide for using its resources to revolutionize and effect change in the community for those with sensory needs, not just those with autism.

### **About Kulture City**

Since the program’s inception, KultureCity has created over 1,000 sensory-inclusive venues in 6 countries: this includes special events such as the NFL Pro-Bowl, NFL Super Bowl, MLB World Series, and MLB All Star Weekend. KultureCity has won many awards for its efforts, including the NASCAR Betty Jane France Humanitarian Award in 2017 and the 2018 Clio Sports Silver for social good in partnership with Cleveland Cavaliers/Quicken Loans Arena. The Cleveland Cavaliers’ Quiet Space Sensory Room at Quicken Loans Arena was a finalist for the 2018 Stadium Business Award, KultureCity was named one of the World’s Most Innovative Companies for 2019 and 2020 by FastCompany and recently won the Industry Partner Award in TheStadiumBusiness Design & Development Awards 2019.

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### **About Central Bank Center**

Located in Lexington, Kentucky, the **Lexington Center Corporation** (LCC) is a not-for-profit 501c3 corporate agency of the Lexington Fayette Urban County Government. It was established in 1974 to manage and maintain Rupp Arena at Central Bank Center, the Central Bank Center (formerly Lexington Convention Center), Triangle Park, and the Lexington Opera House. One of the nation’s most storied entertainment destinations, Central Bank Center venues collectively welcome an average of 1.3 million patrons annually.

Since 1976, **Rupp Arena at Central Bank Center** has served as the home court of the University of Kentucky men’s basketball team, regularly leading the national attendance average. Rupp Arena has hosted legendary artists such as Justin Timberlake, Paul McCartney, Garth Brooks, Chris Stapleton, and many more. Since 2018, Oak View Group and Live Nation Arenas have provided booking services to Rupp Arena. During the last 18 months, Rupp Arena has broken all previous audience attendance and revenue records in its storied 43-year history.

**The Lexington Opera House**, built in 1886 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is one of the premier performing arts centers in the region. Since its opening, the Opera House has played host to such famous stage performers as W.C. Fields, The Marx Brothers, Al Jolson, Julie Harris, Steve Martin, Brian Wilson, and Graham Nash. It has undergone two major renovations and remains a cultural destination in downtown Lexington.

**The Central Bank Center** holds over 200 meetings, trade shows, and special events annually. It just completed a transformative \$310 million expansion, featuring a dramatic, light-filled

architectural design that offers over 200,000 SF of flexible meeting and event space. For more, visit [www.centralbankcenter.com](http://www.centralbankcenter.com) or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.

**OVG360**, a division of the Oak View Group, which was founded by Irving Azoff and Tim Leiweke and supported by Silverlake, specializes in event programming venue assessments and security and emergency preparedness. OVG360 can also provide full management services for arenas, stadiums, convention centers, and performing arts centers. Oak View Group is the largest developer of sports and entertainment facilities in the world with \$4.5 billion of deployed capital across eight projects.