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Gardner-Webb University to Launch Construction of New Softball Stadium

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Office of University Communications

June 19, 2014

Groundbreaking for Brinkley Softball Stadium Set for September

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – The Gardner-Webb University

Department of Athletics is announcing plans for the construction of a new women's softball stadium, to be built in the same location as the current field located on South Main Street in Boiling Springs. The facility will be named after lead donors David and Marie Brinkley, owners of Brinkley Financial Group, based in Kings Mountain, N.C.

Brinkley Softball Stadium will include spacious new dugouts, permanent seating for 350 spectators, a concession stand, and press box, which will house a main working area and two broadcast booths to accommodate radio and video operations. In addition, a new building behind the first base dugout will offer space for coaches' offices, a locker room, conference room, and athletic training area. A practice facility will be built behind the outfield fence to offer athletes additional opportunities to train, even during times of inclement weather.

“This is a project many years in the making, and we are very fortunate and thankful for the Brinkleys' generosity in offering the lead gift for this new stadium,” said Chuck Burch, vice president for athletics. “Very soon, Gardner-Webb softball will play in one of the finest stadiums in the region. Our student-athletes deserve the opportunity to compete in a first-class facility, and this project signals that opportunity.”

Architect's conceptual rendering, proposed rear elevation.

Set to break ground in September, the project will also include a new scoreboard and stadium lighting, which will allow the first evening softball game on Gardner-Webb's home field. The project's completion date has not yet been determined. Alternative ball fields in the surrounding community will be utilized for team practices and games while construction is ongoing.

The Brinkley family enjoys sports of many kinds, and daughters Kristie and Carrie both played volleyball at Gardner-Webb. “About a year ago, I learned about the plans for a new softball field,” said David Brinkley. “I visited the current fields, talked with Coach Tom Cole, and Marie and I began praying about it. We felt these outstanding female athletes deserved to play in a phenomenal facility.”

Cole, who recently began his 15th year as head coach of the GWU softball program, believes current, future, and even previous players will be inspired by the project.

Architect's conceptual rendering, proposed front elevation.

“Each player in our program will be thrilled to play in the new facility and every future player will be ecstatic to join a program with a ballpark of this caliber,” Cole shared. “Every former player will be proud to return to campus and see what we now have here. This is an exciting time for Gardner-Webb softball.”

The Brinkley family hopes their lead gift will inspire others to get involved and support the project. “I challenge others to look at the current field, consider the type of facility that is being planned, and step up with a donation to the project,” Brinkley encouraged. “Whether you give \$100 or \$1,000 or more, this is a much-needed project. Marie and I have always believed that in order to receive blessings, you must first bless others. When you have a chance to serve an institution whose values and mission lines up perfectly with your own, that’s exactly what you should do. We firmly believe this project will breed a winning atmosphere.”

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University’s purpose is to advance the Kingdom of God through Christian higher education by preparing graduates for professional and personal success, instilling in them a deep commitment to service and leadership, and equipping them for well-rounded lives of lasting impact, Pro Deo et Humanitate (For God and Humanity).