

Galanis Family gift provides major renovations to McLane Center

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Thanks to the generosity of the Galanis Family, Alfred University is now home to one of the area's premier Division III indoor athletics facilities.

A gift from the Galanises funded significant renovations to the gymnasium in the 43-year-old McLane Center, home to the Saxons' men's and women's basketball and women's volleyball teams. A new court surface, embossed with the new AU athletics logos, new bleachers, and a new public address system were all part of the project, which began during the spring and was completed in September.

"The renovations done in the gymnasium have made our nearly 45-year-old facility appear brand new and have made an incredible impression on recruits, our current student-athletes and the alumni that have visited since the makeover," AU Director of Athletics [Paul Vecchio](#) commented. "The transformation has been truly stunning."

The Terry S. Galanis Family Arena will be dedicated during a ceremony Dec. 2, between the AU women's and men's basketball games against Fredonia. Tipoff for the women's game is at 6 p.m.; the men's contest follows at 8 p.m.

Terry S. Galanis Sr. is a 1940 Alfred University graduate and founder of Sealing Devices, a Lancaster, NY, firm that manufactures and distributes o-rings, gaskets, adhesives, tapes, vents, sponge and sealing products. His son, Terry S. Galanis Jr, is company president and a member of the AU Board of Trustees.

The Galanis Family has been a generous supporter of the University's intercollegiate athletics program. In 2006, the Galanises funded a full-time junior varsity coach's position for the Saxon football team that remains in place today. The recent gymnasium renovation project replaced the original court surface; traded wooden plank seating for composite bleachers in AU purple; and installed a new state-of-the-art sound system. Combined with the modern bleachers and the new floor -- with large Saxon logos marking each end of the court the Galanis Family Arena is in stunning contrast to the older facility.

"The Galanis Family Arena is a tremendous showcase piece in the McLane Center. The new court and bleachers have greatly modernized our facility and have immediately put us in the conversation as one of the top basketball facilities in the region. It has a 'big-time' feel on game days," said Russ Phillips, head men's basketball coach.

"The state-of-the-art improvements show that there is a campus-wide commitment to not only succeeding on the court but also to enhancing the students' overall experience during their time here. Our team recognizes this and is excited to come into the arena every day to compete," he said.

"The arena is clean, bright, and a perfect centerpiece to the (McLane Center)," added [Amanda Hubbard](#), head women's

volleyball coach, whose team played the first intercollegiate contest in the new facility in September. "It makes you really prideful to walk into for practice and matches every day."

The newly renovated facility has made an impression on their current players, said Phillips, Hubbard, and head women's basketball Coach [Jay Murphy](#), who agree it will benefit them when it comes to recruiting.

"When we bring recruits on campus and show them the Galanis Family Arena they are very impressed," Phillips said. "It is a point of pride in the program and we make sure to highlight it with every recruit. It is a place where they can get excited about playing in."

"When bringing potential student-athletes into the gymnasium they always say, 'Wow, what a great facility!'" Hubbard added. "It has become a main attraction, something to be proud of in the athletics department, and it has a college feel to it so you feel like you are playing in an arena and not a high school gym."

"It's like a brand new gym; it's just beautiful. It has really energized our team," Murphy said. "It will definitely help in recruiting."

The renovations are but the latest in a series of projects that have provided a significant facelift to Alfred University's facilities that serve its intercollegiate athletics program or provide health and wellness opportunities to the AU and local communities.

In 2010, renovations to Merrill Field (renamed Yunevich Stadium) -- which included a new FieldTurf surface, grandstand bleachers and a pressbox -- were unveiled. Two years later, the Connors Family Pavilion, funded by a gift from AU alumni Greg and Jeni Connors, opened on the south end of the stadium grounds. In the spring of 2013, the University opened Harrington Park, its new softball field. And last spring, the Health and Wellness Center, opened. Annexed to the McLane Center, the 33,000-square-foot facility contains an all-purpose court, elevated indoor track, locker rooms, restroom facilities, and a multi-purpose room.

"The recent facility upgrades to our core athletic facilities in the past five years have put Alfred University back in the game amongst both our Empire 8 brethren as well as other top tier Division III universities in the Northeast," Vecchio said. "These improvements speak to Alfred University's long and proud history in intercollegiate sports and its commitment to athletics' vital role in AU's current and future recognition as a top tier university both regionally and nationally. There is no clearer signal that can be sent to both alumni and future Saxons that intercollegiate athletics is a critical component in the fabric of Alfred University than these facility upgrades."

Vecchio was quick to point out that the facility will benefit not only the University's intercollegiate athletics program, but the entire campus community.

"Since its construction in 1971, the McLane Center has been a hub for all of Alfred University, and will continue to be so in the future," he said. "Through the tremendous home court that the Galanis Family Arena will provide to our basketball and volleyball teams to intramurals, physical education classes, concerts, convocations and commencements that will continue to occur there, the impact of the Galanis family's generosity will be felt by tens of thousands of future AU students."