Not long after Benedictine monks founded Saint John’s, they realized that if you want a thriving college for men, you had better have topnotch sports and recreation programs. This is even more evident today.

Game Changer!
A Multimillion-Dollar Investment in Saint John’s Athletic Facilities

“Sports and fitness programs and athletic facilities are among the top factors for men when choosing a college,” comments Dr. Cal Mosley, vice president for admission and financial aid at Saint John’s and Saint Benedict’s. “If we don’t maintain leadership in this area, we’re going to struggle to meet enrollment goals. Just as compelling, a sense of community develops out of athletics for all of our students and alumni—not just current student-athletes.”

Fr. Doug Mullin, SJU vice president for student development, observes that “At Saint John’s, athletics and fitness are central to the holistic education of men. Nationally, 75 percent of college students participate in recreational activities. At Saint John’s, this statistic is even higher—an astonishing 90 percent.

“Athletics are also important to our educational mission,” continues Mullin. “SJU student-athletes have higher graduation rates and higher mean GPAs than our non-athletes. In addition, our coaches are teachers and mentors, and they play key roles in the character and leadership development for so many of our young men.”

“To put things in perspective, there are 650 intercollegiate athletes at SJU,” comments Tom Stock, Saint John’s athletic director. “That’s double most other men’s programs in the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference [MIAC]. We provide 12 intercollegiate sports as well as several club sports including lacrosse, rugby, Nordic ski and water polo. Saint John’s has 4,000 recreation participants every year and a culture of club sports has emerged where we actively recruit club student athletes. At Saint John’s, our students live and breathe athletics.”

First-rate facilities go hand in hand with successful athletic programs. In Minnesota and nationally, the stakes continue to rise.

“The race is on,” says Stock. “Across the country colleges are building multimillion-dollar athletic facilities to boost enrollment, to attract male students to a liberal arts environment and to field competitive sports teams.”

In 2007, Gustavus Adolphus College invested millions in its football stadium, and baseball, track and soccer facilities. Three years ago, Macalester College opened a $42 million, 175,000-square-foot sports and fitness center. Last year, the University of Saint Thomas opened the Anderson Athletic and Recreation Complex, a $52 million, 180,000 square foot facility. “It’s a game changer,” says Stock. “Not just for teams in the MIAC, but for all Division III colleges.”

“The Saint John’s athletic tradition is unrivaled in Division III sports,” continues Stock. “And we have some of the most picturesque sports and recreation fields in the country. Recently, our football stadium was named one of the ‘13 Best Places to Watch College Football,’ which is something the Johnnie faithful can be proud of. But our athletic facilities are no longer adequate to meet the needs and demands of our students. They need a major facelift.”

Since the Warner Palaestra was remodeled and the McNeely Spectrum was built 14 years ago, programs and participants have been added without providing more space to support student needs,” says Stock. “We are woefully inadequate indoors when varsity spring sports begin practice early second semester. We’re barely able to provide outdoor space for the hugely popular fall and spring intramural activities and there is little to no time and space available for free play for the general student body.”

To protect the future of Saint John’s University, it is essential to “invest” in the future of Johnnie athletics.

“We certainly do not need a new $52 million complex,” said Stock. “But we do need a major investment to meet the needs of our students. Otherwise, our competitive advantage in attracting and retaining topnotch student athletes will erode.”

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Athletic Fields Upgrades

Tennis Complex

Baseball Park

Road & Parking

Dome & Turf

Tunnel

Soccer Field

Intramural Fields
Athletic Buildings/Stadium Upgrades

Warner Palaestra
Basketball
Wrestling
Lockers

McNeely Spectrum
Baskets
Track
Bleachers

Fitness & Training

Press Box

Clemens Stadium
Turf
Track
Lights
Dome & Turf

- Seasonal dome
- Synthetic turf
- Dome accessory building
- Terraced seating
- Removable football goal posts
- Portable soccer goals
- Equipment storage

Tennis Court Complex

- 7 U.S.T.A. courts
- Fences and wind screens
- Court lighting
- Bleachers
- Storage building
- Bang board

Entrance/Parking/Tunnel

- New entrance road
- Sidewalks/lighting
- 120 parking stalls
- Landscaping
- Tunnel access from McNeely Spectrum to Dome
Soccer Field
- Natural turf (sand-peat topsoil blend)
- Team dugouts and benches
- Bleacher relocation
- Press box
- Irrigation system
- Retaining wall

Baseball Park
- Baseball field with artificial turf
- 500-seat grandstand
- Press box
- Dugouts
- Field lighting
- Bull pens
- Batting cages

Plaza
- Concession
- Restrooms
- Ticketing
- Storage
Fitness & Training
• Fitness Center/Training Center
• Equipment replacement
• Gathering space (commons)

Football Stadium
• Renovated press box and suites
• Football field turf replacement
• Lights on football field/track
• Recruiting lounge
McNeely Spectrum
• Drop-down baskets
• New bleachers
• Resurface track

Track & Field
• Resurface track
• Relocate hammer and discus

Basketball Arena
• Refurbish floor (Smith Court)
• New shot clocks and backboard lights
• New scoreboard
• New bleachers
• Air conditioning