



News Release

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WESTERN BREAKS GROUND ON INDOOR FACILITY

St. Joseph, Mo. —June 29, 2009—Missouri Western State University broke ground on a \$10.3 million indoor sport and recreation facility that will house the summer training camp of the Kansas City Chiefs beginning in 2010.

“This is truly a milestone in this university’s and the community’s history,” said Dr. Robert Vartabedian, Western’s president. “And as we move forward, let’s not forget the tremendous cooperation and collaboration that made this happen.”

Cooperation and collaboration were major themes for Dr. Vartabedian and the other speakers in the ceremony at the Chris Faros Alumni Pavilion just west of Spratt Stadium, including Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder.

“We are bringing all of those tourism dollars and traffic back to Missouri from Wisconsin,” said Kinder, who was chairman of the Missouri Development Finance Board in December when the board initially approved the tax credits that brought the Chiefs to Western. The Chiefs have been training for 19 years in River Falls, Wis. “It was worth standing up to the critics. It was a great bipartisan effort, working with leaders at the local level and the state level to make this happen.”

State Sen. Charlie Shields, who worked with Kinder, Western and the Chiefs to bring the agreement together, said St. Joseph has taken some tough blows in recent years, with the loss of icons like Quaker Oats, Mead and Stetson Hat.

“It sort of punched us in the gut, and this community needed a new identity,” Shields said. “We can be very, very proud today to say St. Joseph, Mo., is the summer home of the Kansas City Chiefs. That is our new icon.”

The Chiefs were represented by their president, Denny Thum, who was impressed by the enthusiastic crowd of about 250 people who showed up on a weekday morning for the groundbreaking.

“What a great turnout,” Thum said. “If this is just the beginning of what it’s going to be like at training camp, this is going to be very, very special.” He added that the team’s return to the state was “long overdue.”

Dirck Clark, chairman of Western’s Board of Governors, noted that there’s a connection between St. Joseph and the nickname selected by the late Lamar Hunt when he moved his franchise to Kansas City. H. Roe Bartle, the Kansas City mayor who lobbied to bring the franchise from Dallas, had earned the nickname “Chief” by creating the Mic-O-Say honorary society while leading the Boy Scouts of America in St. Joseph.

“When it came time for Mr. Hunt to name his new team, he chose to name it after his good friend, the mayor of Kansas City, who happened to have the nickname ‘Chief,’” Clark said. “So the name has origins in St. Joe, and now the team comes back to St. Joe.”

The city of St. Joseph and Buchanan County have pledged their financial support to the project, and leaders from both were on hand to tout the camp’s benefits.

“There’s absolutely no mistake in my humble mind that when this happens, it is going to be an economic boon for this city and this county,” said Mayor Ken Shearin.

“You don’t know how hard this was to put together,” said Buchanan County Presiding Commissioner R.T. Turner. “But everybody was determined to make this happen. They realized what the impact is going to be for this community, and we’re just excited to be a part of it.”

Dave Williams, Western’s director of athletics, said it was a “great day of excitement for Griffon athletics.” He says nearly every sport will see benefits, and he and his staff look forward to working with the city and the county to find the best possible uses of the facility to improve the quality of life through activities not currently offered, and to create economic impact.

“Many activities fit both of these categories,” Williams said. “But I’m of the opinion that the way to have the greatest impact is to run the best NFL training camp in the country for the Kansas City Chiefs. The better the camp, the more people will show

up for it in St. Joe. The better the camp, the more chance we will extend the contract past its original terms.”

The Chiefs have committed to training at Western for at least five years, and in the state of Missouri for at least ten years.

Crossland Construction Co. Inc. has been awarded the contract to build the indoor sport and recreation facility. Their contract begins July 1, but company officials say it will likely be a week or two before work is visible on the construction site.

Missouri Western State University is a comprehensive regional university providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The university offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo., and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves. Visit www.missouriwestern.edu.

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