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PRESS RELEASE

Members First Credit Union Credit Union gifts \$100k to name UWF hitting facility

Pensacola, Florida (April 28, 2017) : The University of West Florida recently received a \$100,000 gift from Members First Credit Union of Florida to name the hitting facility used by the baseball and softball teams. The official check presentation will be held at 1:45 p.m. on Saturday, April 29 at Jim Spooner Field, before the baseball and softball home games.

The new name, which is pending approval by the UWF Board of Trustees, will be the Members First Credit Union Hitting Facility.

“It is great to have community partners like Members First Credit Union that take an interest in your athletic program,” said Dave Scott, UWF athletic director. “This gift is an investment in the development of our student athletes and will assist in ‘Building Champions for Life.’”

The hitting facility is the University’s new multi-purpose, 9,100-square foot indoor training center for baseball and softball, which was opened at the beginning of the 2016 season. The facility includes LED lighting that adjusts according to daylight, regulation-height pitching mounds for baseball, four hitting bays for batting practice with protective netting that can be raised or lowered to allow for larger surface usage, and a section designed specifically for softball. It is located behind the left field wall at Jim Spooner Field, near the UWF Softball Complex, and allows for simultaneous practices by both teams, even during inclement weather.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The facility was funded in part through a \$150,000 fundraising initiative launched in 2014 and completed by the Members First Credit Union gift.

"Members First is excited to partner with the athletic program at the University of West Florida," Members First Credit Union President Caryl Greene said. "Our roots are in education, and partnering with UWF seemed like a natural progression. Athletics are an integral part of college life, and we wanted to support education at all levels. Our commitment to community, education and family is in the forefront of everything we do. We are \$184 million in assets and have over 16,000 members, but many people still don't know who we are. We felt this was a way to get our name out there and support a great cause."

Baseball Head Coach Mike Jeffcoat described the new facility as the "icebreaker" for the UWF athletic department's master plan to upgrade its sports facilities.

"It brings immediate benefit to our athletes by providing a first class training environment that projects our commitment to success," Jeffcoat said. "I want to thank Members First Credit Union for its incredible gift, and I am honored to see its name placed on our facility."

Softball Head Coach Melissa Paul credited the facility with helping the program attract new recruits.

"We are so grateful for this facility and what it has done and will continue to do for our program," Paul said. "Campers, other teams and potential future Argonauts are blown away by what is one of the top Division II softball hitting facilities in the nation. Our players and staff are so appreciative of the support we have to provide such an amazing facility to work in every day. Thank you to Members First Credit Union for giving us the resources and support we need to stay competitive."

Members First was organized in 1954 as the Escambia County Teachers Credit Union. In recognition of the credit union's continued support of education, the Argos will also be hosting Educators Appreciation Weekend at the baseball and softball games on Saturday and Sunday, April 29-30. All area educators are invited to attend for free by showing a school ID badge or pay stub. The event will feature multiple promotions and giveaways, with prizes provided by Members First Credit Union.

UWF is in the public phase of its 50th Anniversary Capital Campaign, the largest capital campaign in University history. To support the campaign, visit uwf.edu/give.

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