

Maryland releases new plans, photos for Cole Field House project

By **Roman Stubbs** October 19 at 5:41 PM

The University of Maryland has raised half of its private fundraising goal for construction of a \$155 million indoor football facility and academic research center, with the first phase of the project expected to be finished by next May, University President Dr. Wallace Loh said Wednesday.

Construction of the ambitious project to repurpose Maryland's former basketball arena, Cole Field House, into a football facility, sports medicine center and entrepreneurial lab has been underway since last year as funding has continued to roll in, with the school currently holding \$51 million in private donations. Loh expects to raise another \$49 million from private donors, with the rest of the \$55 million expected to come from state and university funds.

The project, which is slated to be completely finished by December 2019, took another step on Wednesday, with the school announcing new plans for its Center for Sports Medicine, Health and Human Performance, which will conduct research on neuroscience and focus on the effects of traumatic brain injuries.

The new medical facility – which will be driven by researchers from Maryland's campuses in College Park and Baltimore – will feature an orthopedic clinic and has received an initial \$3 million in funding from the state support of the MPowering the State initiative. Loh called the new Center for Sports medicine at Cole Field House the “poster child” for the collaboration between the university's campus in College Park and Baltimore, marrying science disciplines with front-line clinicians.

“The new Cole Field House, it becomes the very physical embodiment of the strategic partnership from our campus, and the original University of Maryland Baltimore campus,” Loh said. “Now that we are going to work together in terms of an orthopedic clinic, in terms of a center for sports medicine, health and human performance and doing research on brain concussions, all at Cole Field House, then all of the sudden this becomes a very high profile [project], perhaps the only project of its kind.”

While the project's fundraising efforts began quietly in 2014 – which included a \$25 million donation from Maryland alum and Under Armour founder Kevin Plank – Loh said that the school plans to “go really public and go very aggressively” with its

fundraising campaign in the coming months.

“We need to raise another \$49 million. We are very confident we can reach it,” Loh said. “We have a pool of people, identified by name and we’ve done our research as to how much we can ask each person for.”

The indoor football complex, which will make Maryland the last school in the Big Ten to have such a facility, is expected to be completed in May 2017. While Cole Field House currently is a skeleton in the shadows of Maryland Stadium, nearly 6,000 tons of concrete have been removed from the site and installation of the building’s new roof is under way. Over 30 percent of the football facility, which is considered phase one of the project, is already completed and is on budget, according to Loh.

“When I come to work and go home, driving by what is now the empty skeleton of Cole Field House, I will say it gives me chills,” Loh said. “I’m told you can fit two Boeing 747’s in there. Right next to it will be absolutely incredible state of the art facilities for research and for clinics, all joined with athletics.”

Maryland also released a series of new renderings of the project on Wednesday. Here they are:

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