



AQUATICS AND FITNESS FACILITIES: CONSTRUCTION

By Liberty University News Service

Liberty Natatorium Taking Shape

Construction crews from Glass & Associates Inc. poured the concrete for the 50-meter pool inside the new state-of-the-art Liberty University Natatorium in late June. The project, which is connected to the Liberty Indoor Track Complex that debuted in January, is due to open in less than two months, on the first of November.

"The pool's gutter system has already been installed and they are starting to hook that up," said Liberty women's swimming and diving Head Coach Jake Shellenberger. "They are also building the interior walls that separate the locker rooms and the wet classrooms. There is still a lot of work to do, but they are moving right along. Assistant Coach Jessica Barnes and I are excited to move into the new pool."

The Nicest Pool on the East Coast

Located beneath the LU monogram at the base of the mountain, the 75,000 square-foot facility will be much larger than the current LaHaye Aquatics Center pool. Covered with a barreled roof and plenty of glass to allow for natural lighting, the natatorium will feature

a separate diving well—all surrounded by upper-deck bleachers with a seating capacity of 1,400. The facility will elevate Liberty's NCAA Division I women's swimming and diving team and men's club swimming and water polo programs, while also attracting students and community members of all ages.

The 25-yard-wide pool can be divided into twenty lanes for short-course training, with an additional eight lanes in the diving well allowing multiple teams to practice concurrently. With its proximity to the indoor track, it is equipped to host indoor triathlons, as well. The natatorium will also share a 6,554-square-foot weight room and 2,400-square-foot training room with the indoor track complex.

"It'll be a massive pool," Shellenberger said. "I believe it will be the nicest pool on the East Coast and a top-10 facility nationwide. We're excited about the unique bowl seating configuration, seating on three sides, which is extremely rare. That will create an exciting atmosphere that will rival any facility in the country."

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— HEAD COACH, JAKE SHELLENBERGER

Pool Features and Air Quality Upgrades

The natatorium will also feature a nine-lane, 50-meter pool with a movable bulkhead. A separate 17-foot-deep diving well will include 1- and 3-meter springboards and a 3-column tower, featuring 1, 3, 5, 7.5 and 10-meter platforms. The pool will also feature a 13.6 by 43-foot scoreboard, one of the largest in the country, capable of showing multiple display configurations and video replays. Aside from the natatorium's technical features, air and water

quality systems will also get an upgrade. Air quality features include a Paddock Evacuator push/pull, in-gutter system. The first of its kind in the country, the system pumps in fresh air and exhausts stale air from the surface of the water, through the pool gutter, at 8,000 cubic feet per minute.

Even with the preparation for the move to their new home, things have not slowed down for Shellenberger's teams in the offseason. He hired the program's first full-time diving coach, Tori Lamp Wood, who was the 2013 NCAA

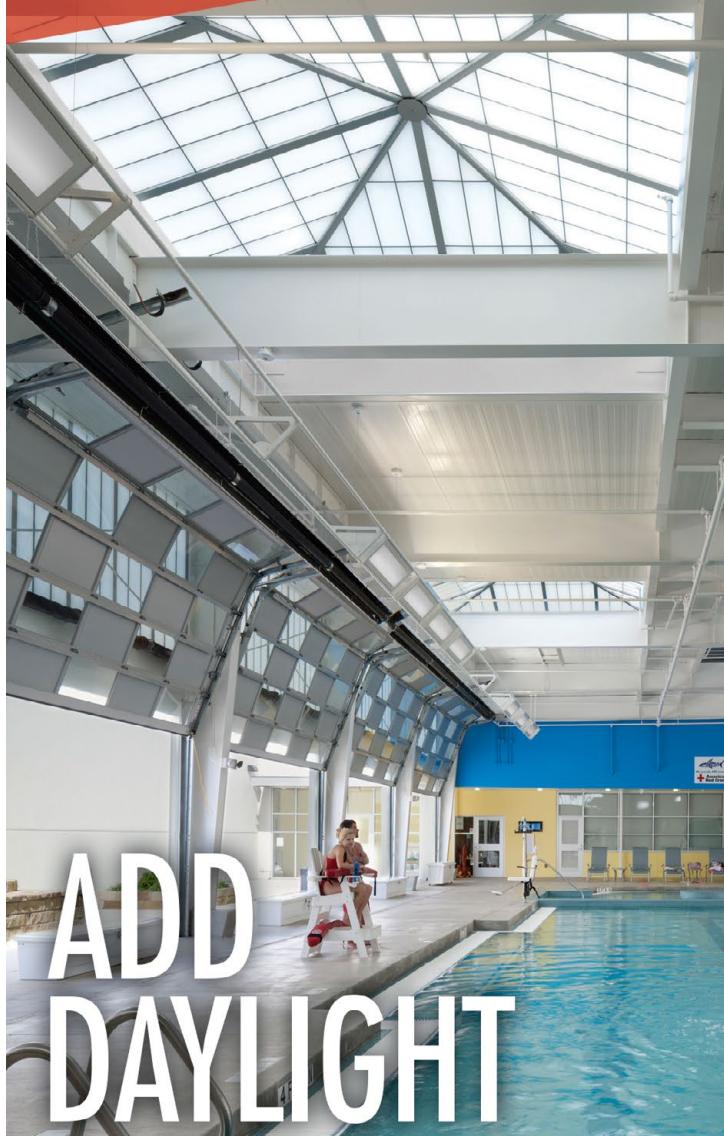
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Sports and Fitness Facilities continued



Women's Diver of the Year as a junior at the University of Tennessee. "With our new natatorium, featuring a separate well and full platform, the sky is the limit for our diving program, and we are excited to see the results we will produce."

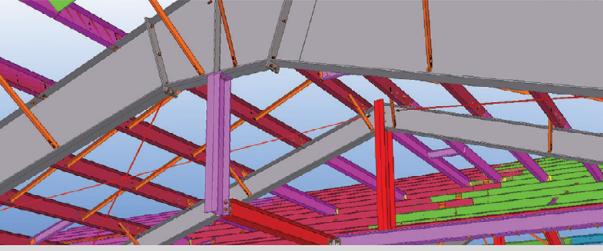
The Lady Flames

The Lady Flames will face some top-notch competition in the 2017-18 season, both in and out of the Coastal Collegiate Sports Association (CCSA). "We have not released our schedule yet, but we do have three home meets scheduled, which is fantastic news for us," Shellenberger said. "There will be some high-level teams coming in for the first year, including some Conference USA opponents."

Similar to the Liberty Indoor Track Complex, which will host the 2018 Big South Conference Indoor Track & Field Championships, the Liberty Natatorium will host the CCSA Swimming & Diving Championships in February 2019. Additionally, as Shellenberger explains, starting this winter and running through next summer, the natatorium has already landed several "big-time high-school age club meets, for both swimming and diving, that will attract myriad people to campus—swimmers and their families and friends, just like the indoor track."

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