

VISION 2020, HIGHER AND BETTER: GAME CHANGER

(From *Rivier Today*, Fall 2019)

Key *Vision 2020* goals fulfilled with the dedication of Linda Robinson Pavilion and naming of Joanne Merrill Field



The dedication of Linda Robinson Pavilion and naming of Joanne Merrill Field recognized two outstanding University and community leaders for their strong spirit, support, and generosity to Rivier. “Each in their own way has consistently answered the call to advance our mission and create a powerful student experience,” said Sister Paula.

More than 200 community members and city officials gathered for the dedication and naming of **Linda Robinson Pavilion** and **Joanne Merrill Field** on September 21, 2019. The culmination of a yearlong construction project, the Athletics Pavilion has transformed the game-day experience for student-athletes and fans with stadium seating, team rooms and conference space for pre- and postgame gatherings, a training room, locker rooms, and a press box with an enhanced sound system.

VISION 2020, HIGHER AND BETTER: TRANSFORMING THE GAME-DAY EXPERIENCE



“This Pavilion is more than just a new facility; it represents a dedication to the University and athletics, inspiring generations of Rivier students to reach ‘Higher and Better,’” said **President Sister Paula Marie Buley, IHM**.



Upon the 50th anniversary of her graduation, devoted alumna and trustee **Linda Lemery Robinson '69/'79G/'94H** extended her commitment to Rivier and the Greater Nashua community with a legacy gift for the Athletics Pavilion.

The naming of Joanne Merrill Field recognizes Merrill’s 40-year career and ongoing service as Director of Athletics. She has created an athletic environment of integrity, service, and leadership for both coaches and student-athletes and led the Raider Athletics program to more than 25 conference championships.

The official opening of Linda Robinson Pavilion and enhancements to Raider Diamond fulfill a major goal of the University’s *Vision 2020* strategic plan. It also acknowledges the impact of athletics in education—the development of complementary skills in leadership, teamwork, prioritization and time management, and service to others.



Enhancements to Raider Diamond include stadium seating, fully equipped dugouts, a press box, and field lighting.

These facilities serve not only as a home of Raider Athletics, but also as a resource for local youth and community groups. ■

THE RELATED NEWS:

Transforming the Game-Day Experience

(From *Rivier Today*, Spring 2019)

Join us for the dedication of the Athletics Pavilion and recognition of the naming of Joanne Merrill Field this fall

The Science and Innovation Center groundbreaking follows construction of the Athletics Pavilion currently underway and scheduled to open this fall. The new facility will turn the athletics field into a stadium, elevating the game-day experience for Raider athletes and fans. The Pavilion will provide stadium seating, locker rooms, team rooms and conference space, a training room, and a press box with an enhanced sound system.

The University will dedicate the new facility during Alumni Reunion Weekend on September 21 and will recognize the naming of Joanne Merrill Field. This distinction honors Merrill for creating an athletic environment of integrity, service, and leadership for both coaches and student-athletes, while also contributing to the University, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and the Great Northeast Athletic Conference (GNAC).

“Joanne's distinguished career deserves nothing less than this honor,” says **Sister Paula Marie Buley, IHM, Rivier's President**. “Her dedication, vision, and enthusiasm for Rivier Athletics have been and continue to be a gift to the University and to the thousands of student-athletes who have competed under her leadership.”



Appointed to the role of Director of Athletics in 1980, Merrill has led the program to more than 25 championships. She is credited with ushering in the era of men's athletic programs in 1991, when Rivier went co-ed, and served as the first men's volleyball coach.

In 2009, the GNAC named Merrill Administrator of the Year with accolades for being a role model and mentor for young administrators. Prior to the NCAA sanctioning Men's Division-III Volleyball in 2011, the North East Collegiate Volleyball Association named founding member Joanne Merrill to the NECVA Hall of Fame.

Also recognized within the local community as an educator, coach, and mentor to countless student-athletes, Merrill was named one of the 25 Extraordinary Women in Greater Nashua by *The Telegraph* in 2014.” ■