Simmons Bank Announces “Game Changing” Support for Female Student-Athletes with Multi-University Sponsorship of Women’s Athletics - December 16, 2021

PINE BLUFF, Ark. - Simmons Bank announced today ground-breaking support for female student-athletes through a multi-university initiative whereby it will be the presenting sponsor of women’s athletics at Arkansas State University, Oklahoma State University, SMU, TCU, University of Arkansas Pine Bluff, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, University of Central Arkansas, University of Memphis, University of Missouri and Vanderbilt University.

At the heart of the sponsorship is a goal to expand beyond traditional sponsorship elements to emphasize customized programming and enhanced career opportunities for female student-athletes. Simmons Bank is collaborating with each university to create distinct programs ranging from financial education curriculum and leadership training to mentoring, internship programs and women-in-business development initiatives. Believed to be the first-of-its-kind corporate sponsorship across multiple schools and encompassing every team within each university’s women’s athletic program, the initiative was created through a relationship between Simmons Bank and LEARFIELD, the universities’ athletics multimedia rightsholder(1).

“The opportunity to partner with leading universities across our footprint to provide financial support while also developing programs to further enhance the qualities female student-athletes gain through competition is an incredible honor for our organization,” said George A. Makris, Jr., chairman and CEO of Simmons Bank.

“Sports teach intangible leadership skills that can’t necessarily be taught in the classroom while also building characteristics that include a strong work ethic, the value of teamwork and determination to see projects through completion - traits that readily translate from the sports world to the corporate world where we all play from the same tees,” added Makris. “We applaud the talent and sportsmanship of these young women and believe our partnership with their universities will position them for even greater success in the future.”

Based on a global study of male and female C-Suite executives conducted byEY and espnW between 2013 and 2016, there is an undeniable correlation between athletic and business success. Results from the study show:

- 94% of women executives have a background in sport and over half participated at university levels
- 80% of women Fortune 500 executives had played competitive sports
- 74% of all executives believed playing sports can help to accelerate a woman’s career
- 61% of the women executives who responded believed playing sports contributed positively to their career success and advancement

According to LEARFIELD CMO Jennifer Davis, the announcement provides powerful college sports co-branding opportunities with broad reach.

“This level of sponsorship, specific to women’s athletics across multiple schools, is a real game changer,” said Davis. “There are many sponsors that have stepped up to support particular women’s athletic teams, but Simmons Bank was very intentional to include all women’s sports at these ten universities as a way to send a prevailing message about the impact and value of female student-athletes. There is tremendous potential for brands to partner with women’s sports in distinct ways that uplift these programs and we’re delighted to partner with Simmons Bank and eight of these schools to shine a big spotlight on the talent, dedication and accomplishments of these student-athletes.”

The multi-university signature program is an expansion of an already robust sports sponsorship platform that Simmons Bank has built over the past several years. Earlier this year the bank announced that it was in negotiations to acquire the naming rights to Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium in Memphis whereby the stadium will be renamed Simmons Bank Liberty Stadium. In Nashville, Simmons Bank is the title sponsor of the PGA TOUR’s Korn Ferry Tour event – the Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation. The bank also boasts brand ambassador relationships with professional golfers including 2021 Masters sensation and PGA TOUR 2021 Rookie of the Year winner Will Zalatoris. In St. Louis, Simmons Bank is a proud sponsor of the St. Louis Blues, a member of the National Hockey League, as well as the Official Bank of the Ascension Charity Classic, a new event on the PGA Champions Tour. In Fort Worth, the bank is the official banking partner and naming rights holder for the Simmons Bank Plaza and Simmons Bank Pavilion at Dickies Arena, as well as a major sponsor of the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo. In Arkansas, the bank is the signature sponsor of Simmons Bank Arena in Little Rock, and Simmons Bank Field and Simmons Bank Pavilion at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. In October, the bank announced that it was in

negotiations to acquire the naming rights to the field at War Memorial Stadium and, upon completion, the field be renamed Simmons Bank Field. In partnership with the Tennessee Golf Association and the Arkansas State Golf Association, the bank is the presenting sponsor of the Simmons Bank Cup, a Ryder Cup-style tournament featuring amateur champions from both states.

“People are passionate about sports and partnerships like this give us an opportunity to connect with our customers on a more personal level while supporting the communities we serve,” said Elizabeth Machen, executive vice president of marketing and communications at Simmons Bank. “Sports are also associated with values that perfectly align with the Culture Cornerstones at Simmons Bank – better together, integrity, passion, high performance and pursue growth. We believe a sponsorship at this level allows Simmons Bank to make a real difference for female student-athletes, with programming that supports young women not only as rising athletes, but also as future business professionals and community leaders.”

The relationship with Simmons Bank was secured on behalf of each university by its athletics’ multimedia rightsholder and locally based LEARFIELD team*: Red Wolves Sports Properties, Cowboy Sports Properties, Mustang Sports Properties, Horned Frogs Sports Properties, Little Rock Trojan Sports Properties, Tiger Sports Properties, Mizzou Sports Properties and Vanderbilt Sports Properties.

**The University of Arkansas Pine Bluff and the University of Central Arkansas are not represented by LEARFIELD. The relationship with Simmons Bank was secured by Simmons Bank and the University of Arkansas Pine Bluff and the University of Central Arkansas, respectively.*

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About Simmons Bank

Simmons Bank is a wholly owned subsidiary of Simmons First National Corporation (NASDAQ: SFNC), a Mid-South based financial holding company. Simmons Bank operates over 200 branches in Arkansas, Missouri, Tennessee, Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. Founded in 1903, Simmons Bank offers comprehensive financial solutions delivered with a client-centric approach. Simmons Bank was named to *Forbes* magazine’s list of “World’s Best Banks” for the second consecutive year and ranked among the top 30 banks in *Forbes’* list of “America’s Best Banks” for 2021. Additional information about Simmons Bank can be found on our website at simmonsbank.com, by following @Simmons_Bank on Twitter or by visiting our newsroom

About LEARFIELD

LEARFIELD is a leading media and technology services company in intercollegiate athletics. The company unlocks the value of college sports for brands and fans through an omnichannel platform with innovative content and commerce solutions. LEARFIELD services includes licensing and multimedia sponsorship management; publishing, audio, digital and social media; data analytics; ticketing, ticket sales and professional concessions expertise; branding; campus-wide business and sponsorship development; and venue technology systems. Since 2008, it has served as title sponsor for the acclaimed LEARFIELD Directors’ Cup, supporting athletic departments across all divisions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

ED BILEK
Simmons Bank
Director of Investor and Media Relations
205.612.3378
ed.bilek@simmonsbank.com

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