Simmons Bank Chooses to Retain Liberty as Part of Title Sponsorship - October 21, 2021

Pine Bluff, Ark. – Simmons Bank (Simmons) announced today while it continues to complete negotiations on a title sponsorship deal with the City of Memphis, it has chosen Simmons Bank Liberty Stadium as the new name of the stadium. Earlier this month, Simmons announced, in partnership with the City of Memphis, that it was in advanced negotiations, subject to the execution of a definitive agreement, to be the title sponsor of Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium.

“Although history would suggest the use of the original name, Memorial Stadium, the incredible support of Memphians in favor of using the word ‘Liberty’ in the name of the stadium has resulted in a new name for the stadium – Simmons Bank Liberty Stadium,” said George A. Makris, Jr., chairman and CEO of Simmons.

“The feedback we received, especially from veterans, was that ‘Liberty’ more broadly recognized the service and sacrifice of our veterans by remembering WHY they served so faithfully – to preserve our liberty,” Makris added

Opened in 1965 as Memphis Memorial Stadium, the stadium serves as a tribute to the veterans of World War I, World War II and the Korean War. Renamed Liberty Bowl Stadium in 1975, the stadium is the home to the University of Memphis football team, the Southern Heritage Classic and the AutoZone Liberty Bowl. The stadium also hosts a variety of other events, such as concerts, family shows, band competitions and corporate events.

Steve Ehrhart, executive director of the AutoZone Liberty Bowl stated, “Our founder, Bud Dudley, returned from flying many missions over Europe during World War II where he lost many of his fellow pilots and navigators. Bud vowed to found an institution that would salute and preserve the concept of Liberty. Our Bowl Game commemorating Liberty thus was born in 1959. Thereafter, in 1975, the stadium in Memphis was renamed Liberty Bowl Stadium in tribute to the AutoZone Liberty Bowl. We are delighted that Simmons Bank Liberty Stadium will continue to host the AutoZone Liberty Bowl for years to come.”

To further recognize the service and sacrifice of our military, veterans and their families, Simmons also announced an $110,000 commitment to the Woody Williams Foundation, a charitable nonprofit organization dedicated to raising public awareness to honor, recognize and serve Gold Star Families members and relatives whose loved one made the ultimate sacrifice in protecting our freedom. The donation will be used for construction and endowment of the Liberty Park Gold Star Families Memorial Monument.

“Words cannot express our appreciation in knowing that Liberty will be retained as part of the new stadium name,” said Trish Sorce, co-chairperson of the Liberty Park Gold Star Families Memorial Monument Committee.

John D. Santi, Sr., founder of MFO USA and co-chairperson of the Liberty Park Gold Star Families Memorial Monument added, “To have Simmons Bank reach out to our organization and make such a generous commitment is truly amazing. We are excited to have Simmons Bank part of the project and a stronger part of our community.”

Hershel “Woody” Williams served in the Battle of Iwo Jima with the 21st Marines, 3rd Marine Division. During the battle, Williams, displayed devotion to duty and service above self as he enabled his company to reach its objective. His actions, commitment to his fellow service members, and heroism were recognized on Oct. 5, 1945, when he received the Congressional Medal of Honor from President Truman. Now 98 years old, Williams is the sole surviving Marine from World War II to wear the Medal of Honor.

To date, Williams and his foundation are responsible for establishing 88 Gold Star Families Memorial Monuments across the United States, with more than 79 additional monuments underway, covering all 50 states and Guam.

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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 with approximately $23.4 billion in assets as of June 30, 2021. Simmons Bank operates 198 branches, including 68 in Arkansas, 48 in Missouri, 33 in Tennessee, 23 in Texas, 20 in Oklahoma and 6 in Kansas. Founded in 1903, Simmons Bank offers comprehensive financial solutions delivered with a client-centric approach. Simmons Bank was recently 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.

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