



Louisville
Urban League

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NEWS RELEASE

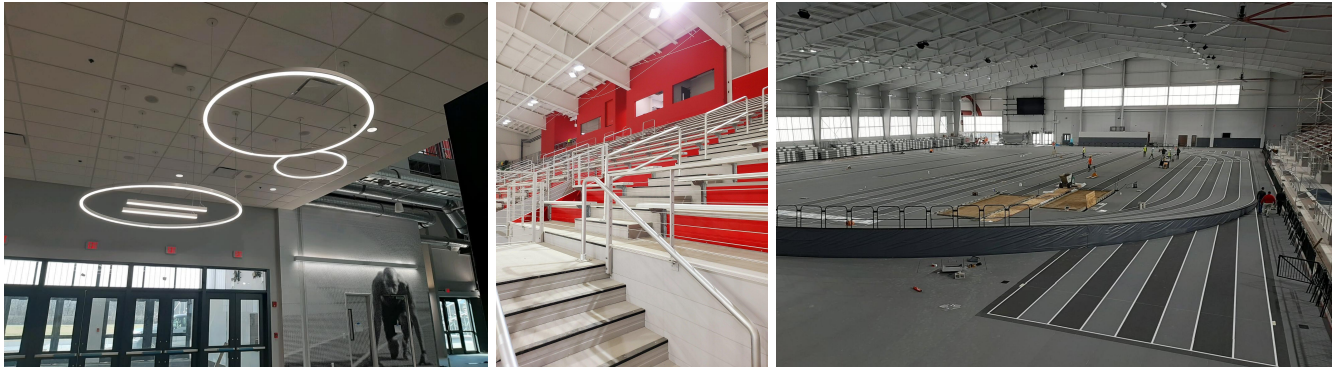
**LOUISVILLE URBAN LEAGUE TO OPEN
STATE-OF-THE-ART TRACK AND FIELD FACILITY**

March 9, 2021, Louisville, KY— On Tuesday, March 9, 2021, the Louisville Urban League cut the ribbon on the Norton Healthcare Sports and Learning Center. The state-of-the-art facility at the corner of 30th and West Muhammad Ali Boulevard sits on a 24-acre campus with an outdoor track to open in the spring along with a large community green space.

After plans for the contaminated lot fell through in the fall of 2016, hundreds of residents came together in community meetings and public hearings held at the League, LCCC, and 1619 FLUX to dream about what could be. They brainstormed ideas, challenged different proposals, and ultimately requested and supported plans for the sports facility—trusting the Louisville Urban League to see it through. In the time since, what has emerged, is a \$53 million dollar example of the type of investment that Black communities across the country deserve to see happening.

“Sixteen months ago, we began construction on a vision—a vision that is beyond sports and represents a true catalytic investment in a community that has been intentionally and systemically redlined in every way,” Louisville Urban League President and CEO Sadiqa Reynolds said. “This building is not the solution to everything that pains the West End and this community, but it did clear 24 acres of land that was sitting contaminated and abandoned for more than 10 years in our community and it is a symbol of what equitable planning and investment can look like. It is the start of something special for track and field, this community, and Louisville. We know that education and financial empowerment are key, we will use this facility as a carrot toward those larger goals. It is the honor of my life to lead this project.”

A facility that SportsTravel Magazine has ranked #2 among world-wide venues to “[keep an eye on](#),” the 24-acre, multi-sport complex located in Louisville’s Russell neighborhood, will host a variety of local, regional and national track meets, other sporting events, concerts, educational experiences, and other events. The facility features 90,000 square feet of floor space with a 4,000 seat, 200-meter banked indoor track and competition areas for all jump, vaults and throws. The indoor track’s Mondo hydraulic floor can be lowered to provide space to add a stage and floor seating to host concerts and other events like robotics conferences. Additionally, the complex includes a 4-lane mini-bowling alley, an interactive rock-climbing wall, and a multi-purpose space to be used for educational programming for the Louisville community.



Featured inside and outside this complex are images and words that celebrate Black excellence. There is an expansive 30th Street wall-scape piece spanning a full city block that includes local Black leaders including Elmer Lucille Allen, Ed Hamilton, Alberta Jones, Mattie Jones, and Lewis Coleman Jr. , as well as a poem etched in the community green sidewalk, floor-to-ceiling artwork in the entrance vestibule, and more. These are written and developed by Black artists including Hannah Drake, Calvin Baker, Charles “Bud” Dorsey, Jr., Ty Lancaster, Marvin Young, and Carey Payne—all making clear that this facility is about much more than sports. This space is a tribute to the strength and resilience of the Black community.

“Building in the midst of a global pandemic and amid the most fervent cries for racial justice in decades, this project’s continued forward motion has provided hope and inspiration,” Reynolds said. “And this project is not just being completed against this backdrop, but it is doing so while setting a new example in Kentucky for Black spending and Black workforce participation. We set ambitious goals of attempting to spend 40% of our project costs with Black people and Black companies. We met them. In fact, this project may have the highest Black spend of any Kentucky project to date. We also created 302 jobs during this project. We didn’t set Kentucky goals; we set Atlanta goals because the West End deserved that investment.”

Total project costs are \$53 million. In just 22 months, the Urban League raised \$43 million by compiling philanthropic gifts, corporate sponsorships, and tax credits. For those corporations and organizations interested in being a part of this transformational project by supporting its ongoing operations, numerous sponsorship opportunities remain. This will be important because the League borrowed the last \$10 million needed to complete the project.

The key driver behind both the federal and state New Market Tax Credits that this project received was the National Development Council (NDC). NDC invested its own federal NMTC allocation in this project, then went to the Commonwealth of Kentucky to secure additional state NMTCs. They invited other Community Development Entities (“CDEs”) to allocate their NMTCs in this project as well. Ultimately, NDC partnered in this project with PNC Bank, US Bank and four other CDEs across the country including The Reinvestment Fund, Telesis Corporation, LISC, and Lower Brule Corporation.

“What Sadiqa Reynolds and the Louisville Urban League have done here is simply remarkable,” said National Urban League President and CEO, Marc H. Morial. “The Urban League Movement has always been dedicated to creating opportunity and uplifting communities, and there is no greater example than this facility and the possibilities it holds.”

“We are very proud to have been an early partner in this project with the Louisville Urban League,” said Russell F. Cox, CEO and President, Norton Healthcare. “We are committed to health equity in our community, and the opportunities for activities, classes, and events in this sports and learning center are critical to achieving that. It takes many like-minded partners working together to realize the transformational change that Sadiqa Reynolds and the Louisville Urban League envisioned for this project, and we are fully invested.”

“Once we started working with Sadiqa Reynolds and the Louisville Urban League, we were all in,” said Daniel Marsh, President and CEO of the National Development Council. “We could see this was more than just a project but a mission, and the Louisville Urban League was going to make it happen. It’s easy to put a number on the investment but the community benefits are incalculable. Congratulations to Sadiqa Reynolds and the entire Norton Healthcare Sports and Learning Center team.”

“USA Track & Field is thrilled that the Louisville Urban League’s national-class facility will soon be opening,” said Max Siegel, USATF CEO. “USATF collaborated with LUL on the planning and design of the structure, and we know that this national-class facility will make a huge difference to athletes from youth to masters in providing a training and competition facility. Additionally, the potential for hosting USATF events is very exciting.”



“This facility is an amazing example of a community investing in itself,” said Dale Cowper, Head Coach of the University of Louisville Track & Field team. “The Norton Healthcare Sports & Learning Center is a game-changing facility for the sport of Track & Field. More importantly, it will become the epicenter of economic stimulus and continued development in West Louisville.”

The Louisville Sports Commission has worked with ASM Global to secure a number of track and field events for the venue and anticipates a growing demand as it will draw a variety of exciting entertainment and educational opportunities. The regional draw of the facility will increase hotel stays and visitor spending in the area, bringing a large economic impact to the Louisville region.

“The addition of this new center represents encouraging growth in Louisville’s West End,” said Cleo Battle, Chief Operating Officer of Louisville Tourism. “The venue gives Louisville Tourism another tool to continue positioning Louisville as a regional and national site for sports events. This state-of-the-art athletic center will be instrumental in helping generate a variety of youth and championship events.”

Information on upcoming events at the facility can be found [here](#) or on the facility’s various social media platforms; Facebook, Twitter (@NortonSLC), or Instagram (@NortonSLC).

About Louisville Urban League

The Louisville Urban League assists African Americans and those at the margins in attaining social and economic equality and stability through direct services and advocacy. For more information, go to lul.org or follow us on Facebook, Twitter (@louisvilleUL), or Instagram (@louisville_ul).

About ASM Global

ASM Global is the world’s leading venue management and services company. The company was formed by the combination of AEG Facilities and SMG, global leaders in venue and event strategy and management. The company’s elite venue network spans five continents, with a portfolio of more than 300 of the world’s most prestigious arenas, stadiums, convention and exhibition centers, and performing arts venues. From Aberdeen to Anchorage, and Sydney to Stockholm, its venues connect people through the unique power of live experiences.

About NDC

NDC is a national nonprofit that directs capital and financial expertise to local communities, governments, and agencies. Spanning all aspects of economic development, NDC invests in affordable housing; creates jobs through small business lending; advances livable communities through social infrastructure; and builds capacity with hands-on professional development training and technical assistance to the public and private sectors. Founded in 1969, NDC continues to evolve and innovate to meet the needs of today’s challenges with an emphasis on low- and moderate-income communities, including COVID-19 recovery programs and services.

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