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For immediate release: Tower Park renovation gets another gift, this time for baseball

VALPARAISO - Renovation of Tower Park is getting another significant boost with a lead gift from the Samardzija family to renovate the baseball/softball field in the park at Franklin Street and Evans Avenue. The Valparaiso Parks Department and the Valparaiso Parks Foundation gratefully announce this gift as the latest in a series of public private partnerships that will be announced in the coming weeks.

Samardzija Field will feature Valpo's first youth field turf baseball/softball infield and outfield playing surface, distinctive dugouts, unique spectator plaza and state of the art field fencing and scoreboard amenities. Improved drainage, landscaping and hard surface pathways to additional parking will also be part of the planned improvements.



Mr. & Mrs. Sam Samardzija were always exceptional role models and supporters of sports and its values for their own children and for the youth of Valparaiso. Both Samardzija kids excelled at sports through their VHS years, with Jeff continuing to achieve All-American honors in football and baseball at Notre Dame. He is now an all-star major league pitcher with the San Francisco Giants.

"As a Valparaiso native, this is truly a very special day. However not only for myself and my family, but also for the kids of Northwest Indiana. It is my hope that this new facility will help inspire generations to come in Valpo, and provide them with the resources they need to succeed both on and off the field." - *Jeff Samardzija*

Construction will begin on Tower Park basketball courts in July 2016 and completed in October 2016.

Construction on Samardzija Field will begin in September 2016 and be completed in summer 2017.

"This is the latest example of our extraordinary community culture of leaders giving back," said Parks Director John Seibert. "We could not accomplish this level of quality without the vision and generosity of our public private partnerships. It has been my privilege to work on this project directly with Sam Samardzija and we are so grateful to Jeff and the whole Samardzija family for their desire to pay forward their love of sports to the next generation."

This is the first of many volunteer and private sector announcements and opportunities that will be part of the Valpo Park Foundation's Leaders Giving Back Campaign that will support renovation of sports facilities, neighborhood parks and other special venues.

Dr. Jerry Rodenbarger and Dr. Robert Behrend are co-chairing the Leaders Giving Back campaign for the Tower Park Renovation. The Foundation has a variety of ways for the public to be involved in the project.

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