# Georgia College & State University celebrates groundbreaking of E.R. Snell Family Stadium

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Photo: Will Newbury

The Snell family's love of baseball and deep ties to Georgia College & State University are helping shape the future of Bobcat baseball.

The Snell family's $2 million gift from their family-owned E.R. Snell company is the driving force behind a $5 million stadium renovation that will honor both the family's generosity and the legacy of legendary coach John Kurtz, while giving future generations of Bobcats a place to build memories of their own.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on Friday for a renovation that will include new seating and modernized facilities to create a destination for scholar-athletes, students and fans to enjoy.

Pending final approval by the University System of Georgia Board of Regents, the venue will be renamed E.R. Snell Family Stadium at John Kurtz Field in recognition of E.R. Snell's record-setting gift and Georgia College Hall of Famer John Kurtz, the legendary coach who put GCSU baseball on the map.

Snellville's E.R. Snell is a fifth-generation, family-owned and operated leader in Georgia's asphalt and road construction industry with strong ties to Georgia College. Chandler Snell ('11), an E.R. Snell vice president, is a GCSU alumnus and former member of the baseball team who helped lead the Bobcats to the NCAA Division II World Series in 2010. Chandler's father, Robin Snell, was president of E.R. Snell from 1997 to 2017 and formerly served on the GCSU Foundation Board of Trustees.

"This is a special day for our family and the company," Chandler Snell said at Friday's groundbreaking ceremony. "Like so many of the former players, so many of my best memories were made in this program with teammates and coaches who became my lifelong friends.

"Georgia College gave me an opportunity to compete, to grow and to learn lessons that stayed with me well beyond the baseball field. To now stand here representing my family and this company as we take the next step in the future of this program is something I'm proud and thankful for.

"Yes, this will be a great baseball facility, but more importantly this stadium will be a place where young men will make friendships, learn how to compete, experience success and failure, and build memories that will last the rest of their lives, just like I was able to do here."

The project will establish a true stadium atmosphere at home baseball games with a concourse that welcomes fans to 435 chairback seats, replacing the aluminum bleachers.

Updated plans call for construction of a combined press box and multipurpose suite. The 1,400-square-foot suite, with its open-porch viewing area, will host events year-round with the playing field serving as a unique backdrop. The press box will house dedicated spaces for gameday operations and media.

A new concession stand and bathrooms will also be built between the baseball and softball fields, benefiting both Bobcat athletic programs.

"These game-changing improvements are not just about having a nice-looking facility," Georgia College President Cathy Cox said. "It's about what they can do for the University. It's about what they can do for all the scholar-athletes and families that will come here to play and watch and be part of the whole Bobcat experience in a first-rate atmosphere. That is what we aspire to do throughout this university."

Work on the baseball stadium is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2027, making the 2028 season the first to be played in the updated space.

The project marks the first ground-up athletic facility construction at GCSU since the soccer complex was built in 2003.