

Utica AUD Naming Rights Deal Exemplifies Sustainability and Civic Pride

The current West End Expansion Project is not the only addition coming to The AUD this fall.

On September 27, Oneida County Executive Anthony Picente announced the 10-year, multi-million-dollar naming rights partnership between The AUD Authority and Adirondack Bank, amending the name of The AUD to the Adirondack Bank Center at the Utica Memorial Auditorium. The naming rights deal is the first in the history of the venue, which was erected in 1959 and exists today as a National Historic Engineering Landmark.

“The new name and partnership with Adirondack Bank are a reflection of the growth and transformation that The AUD has experienced in recent years,” said Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. “The rebirth of the AUD has been one of Oneida County’s premier success stories, and the local partnership announced this week is a testament to just that.”

The symbiotic relationship between The AUD and Adirondack Bank falls at an opportune time, as the West End Expansion Project comes to a close; the project will add much-needed women’s restrooms, office space, ADA-compliant renovations, a full sprinkler system, and suites & loge seating, elevating the fan experience across the board. The naming rights partnership also coincides with the start of both the Comets and Utica College Pioneer’s home openers, both of which take place in less than five weeks.

But it’s more than just timing that makes sense for the newly-named Adirondack Bank Center and the various parties involved. Earlier this summer, The AUD was one of only seven teams across the AHL without a naming rights partner attached to their building, and one of only four teams lacking multiple suite or club box seating options; now, the renovated venue is able to elevate itself on par with other AHL and even some NHL arenas.

Next comes the sustainability factor. By signing a 10-year, multi-million-dollar deal, the Adirondack Bank Center has further established itself as the sports and entertainment epicenter for the Mohawk Valley - ensuring that it will be that way for the next decade and beyond. The partnership also places a large importance on remembering the veterans, further memorializing their legacies and their unwavering positive impact on our community. Keeping the ‘Utica Memorial Auditorium’ in the name was a must for both The AUD Authority and Mohawk Valley Garden, as it places importance on our veterans, as they protect our freedoms.

“As both the General Manager of The AUD and a Combat-Disabled Veteran of our Great Armed Forces, I am happy to be involved with the great upgrades to our Memorial Auditorium,” GM of the venue Rick Redmond expressed. “I am honored to see this great

memorial grow, and especially honored to welcome Adirondack Bank as our naming rights sponsor.”

The final integral piece to the naming rights partnership is Adirondack Bank Center’s embodiment of civic pride. Adirondack Bank, Mohawk Valley Garden, The AUD Authority, the Utica Comets, the Utica College Pioneers, and the Utica Jr. Comets all represent a commitment to our area and a representation of civic pride. The fact that Adirondack Bank is locally owned and operated, and prides itself in a core goal of banking local, aligns with the Comet Culture and values of The AUD itself.

“We are a local company devoted to giving back to our community, so the opportunity to be a part of the sports and entertainment epicenter in our area was not only a practical decision, but a decision that we hope can highlight our brand in conjunction with the Comets, Pioneers, and the venue as a whole,” explained Robert Clark, Executive Vice President of Adirondack Bank.

“The new partnership we have begun with Adirondack Bank is something that has the power to advance our community through sports and entertainment,” said Mohawk Valley Garden President Robert Esche. “The AUD is a physical manifestation of the power of civic pride, and this milestone paints an even brighter future for our area.”

Throughout the first year of the partnership, Clark and Esche plan to join forces on all Comets and AUD events, as well as relevant community endeavors that best showcase their unified brand. Adirondack Bank Center, in its newly renovated state, will continue to provide the Mohawk Valley with unparalleled sporting events and showcases, while representing the area and its history with pride.

It is hard to predict what the next decade will hold, but one can be sure that this is just the beginning of a local alliance that honors the past, embraces the present, and always strives towards the future.