**Recreation Center Talking Points**

**Enriching the home of discovery and achievement: The new Recreation Center at WPI**

**Project Details:**
- Expected completion (if it remains on schedule): Fall 2011
- Total cost: $50 million
- Funds to be raised from alumni and friends: $30 million

The new Recreation Center is part of WPI’s overall plans to expand possibilities for student achievement.

- The new Recreation Center will provide the entire WPI community with a premium sports and exercise center while upgrading significantly the practice, strength and conditioning, and competition facilities for WPI’s varsity athletes.
- It will provide a much needed upgrade of facilities for women students. More than 35 years after their arrival on campus, WPI women are still using sports and fitness facilities that were originally designed for men.
- It will feature a regulation pool, basketball courts, a fully equipped fitness and weight-training center, a running track, workout rooms, attractive common spaces, classrooms, offices, and meeting areas.
- Located at the end of the Quad, this facility will also serve as a hub for WPI community activities—from sports and recreation to robotics competitions, career fairs, and campus celebrations.
- If it remains on the current schedule, the new Recreation Center will open in fall of 2011.

The Recreation Center will transform the WPI campus and provide an opportunity to enhance academic facilities.

- Situated on the hillside above the playing fields, the center will present a nine-story façade to the fields below and Park Avenue beyond, while creating a true, four-sided quadrangle that will be free from cars and open to pedestrian enjoyment.
- It will allow Alumni Gym, built in 1911, to be converted into an academic building, supporting WPI’s reputation for academic excellence. Discussions include transforming Alumni Gym into a new home for our Project Center faculty and other important academic programs.
- The completion of the quad will also bring the welcome removal of the structure connecting Harrington Auditorium and Alumni Gym, opening up a picturesque view from the quad down to the Higgins House gardens.
- This project also provides an innovative solution to the demand for campus parking: an underground parking facility. The construction will include lifting the baseball and softball fields, which presently sit well below the elevation of Park Avenue, to create approximately 600 parking spaces. This parking area will be covered by artificial turf and lights, expanding significantly WPI’s outdoor recreational space.
- Judging from the initial ideas from the architects, the Recreation Center promises to be a stunning addition to WPI’s beautiful campus and a facility that students, faculty, staff, and alumni will enjoy for years to come.
Students come to WPI expecting top-quality facilities, in all areas of their college experience. The Recreation Center will enhance WPI’s competitive position in the marketplace.

By supporting the new Recreation Center, you will be helping WPI prepare students to discover, grow, achieve, and lead.

- Through rigorous academics, meaningful international experiences, and a campus life rich in opportunities for social interaction and personal and intellectual growth, WPI strives to educate the whole student. Varsity athletics, recreational activities, fitness, and the social interaction, leadership training, and team building that accompanies these activities are important aspects in the life and overall education of WPI students.
- On any given day, members of the WPI community may be competing in one of 18 varsity sports, participating in dozens of intramural and club activities, taking part in 75 physical education courses, or keeping up with their personal fitness routines.
- The Recreation Center will be widely used by WPI students:
  - 58 percent participate in physical education classes
  - 26 percent participate in club activities
  - 47 percent participate in intramurals
  - 18 percent participate in varsity athletics

You will also be supporting a record of athletic excellence at WPI.

- WPI recently earned the Worcester CUP for the second time in three years, recognizing the university as the top athletic program in Worcester County.
- In spring 2008, junior outfielder Scott McNee was named the NEWMAC Player of the Year. This is the first time in the 10-year history of the conference that an Engineer has earned this title.
- This winter, Women’s basketball player Elle Fontaine was named Most Valuable Player in WPI’s bracket for the ECAC Holiday Festival tournament.
- Among many awards and accolades he earned this year, senior defensive back Andrew Sides was named today to the ECAC 2008 Division III Northwest Football All-Star Team. Sides was one of nine players named to the team from Liberty League schools and was the only member of the Engineers selected.
- WPI athletes are models for pursuing excellence in academics and in athletic competition.
  - Men’s basketball player Ryan Cain, for example, was named the 2007 Josten’s Division III Student Athlete of the Year, in recognition of his basketball ability, academic prowess, and community service.
  - In fall 2008, soccer player Ben Gilde was named to the ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America First Team. Last year, WPI has three All-Americans.
  - Five other WPI athletes earned ESPN The Magazine Academic District I accolades this fall: football players Jonathan Shoemaker and Aaron Champagne (first team); soccer player Meg Pasquali (first team); soccer player Kristen Garza (second team); and volleyball player Becca Holmberg (first team).
  - And WPI is traditionally near the top of the NEWMAC in students honored in both Academic All-America and District, as well as those honored with All-NEWMAC Academic honors.
You can continue the tradition of alumni support for sports and recreation at WPI.

- More than 90 years ago, WPI alumni recognized the need for premium athletic facilities. They answered that need by raising $165,505 to build the Alumni Gymnasium. Alumni can continue that tradition by supporting the new Recreation Center.
- WPI intends to raise $30 million from alumni, friends, and other private sources for this project.
- The total cost of the project is $50 million. The remaining $20 million will be financed.
- There are many opportunities for naming spaces in the Recreation Center (see list).