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Board Meeting

September 18, 2025

# APPROVE NAMING OF GIES MEMORIAL STADIUM, URBANA

**Action:** Approve Naming of Gies Memorial Stadium

**Funding:** No New Funding Required

The chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and vice president, University of Illinois System, recommends approval of a proposal from the director, Division of Intercollegiate Athletics (DIA), University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, to name Memorial Stadium as Gies Memorial Stadium.

A landmark at the Urbana-Champaign university, Memorial Stadium was originally dedicated in 1924 to honor Illinois men and women who gave their lives in service to our country during times of war and conflict. For over a century, the stadium has served as a venue for athletic competitions, university ceremonies, and community events. In recent years, the university has undertaken a series of renovations to modernize the stadium, enhance its functionality, and improve the experience for attendees and participants.

University of Illinois alumnus Larry Gies has made a $100.0 million gift to DIA in support of the Fighting Illini football program, including Memorial Stadium. The commitment is the largest gift in DIA history and represents one of the largest single gifts ever received by a college athletics program. Mr. Gies is a long-standing philanthropic leader and dedicated supporter of the University of Illinois. His transformative financial contribution has propelled the Gies College of Business toward becoming the most innovative and impactful business school in the nation. His unprecedented support with this gift will create an immediate and lasting impact for current and future Fighting Illini student-athletes.

Mr. Gies is making the gift in honor of his late father, Larry Gies Sr., a United States Army veteran. His father’s unwavering dedication to his country and selfless service left a lasting impression on Mr. Gies. Gies Memorial Stadium will continue to serve as a powerful symbol honoring all who have fought bravely to protect our nation’s freedom. Through this contribution, Mr. Gies hopes to inspire remembrance, gratitude, and continued support for our nation’s men and women in uniform. In addition to his support for education, health, and athletics, Mr. Gies also has a long history of support for the armed forces. He was the 2023 recipient of the Semper Fidelis Award, the highest award given by the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation, for his commitment to providing need-based scholarships to military children.

Article V, Section 4 (b), of *The* *General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure* states, “the naming of facilities and programs lies within the authority of the Board of Trustees and shall require Board approval” except in accordance with specific exceptions. In recognition of and with gratitude for Mr. Gies’s extraordinary commitment to the University, the Illinois Fighting Illini football program, and the continued enhancements of Memorial Stadium, approval is sought from the Board to designate Memorial Stadium as “Gies Memorial Stadium.”

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The president of the University of Illinois System concurs.