

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

Resolution

Honoring Coach Saban and Naming Saban Field at Bryant-Denny Stadium

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the University of Alabama (“Board”) wishes to recognize Nick Lou Saban for his remarkable 17-year career as the head football coach of the University of Alabama Crimson Tide; and

WHEREAS, Coach Saban’s on-field success has contributed to a period of unprecedented growth and success for the University of Alabama (“UA”), including a strengthened and enhanced national brand of excellence, increased external financial support for intercollegiate athletics, and a significant enrollment increase from 25,580 students in 2007 to 39,623 students in 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Board hereby expresses its enduring appreciation to Coach Saban and, for the reasons detailed below, honors him by naming Saban Field at Bryant-Denny Stadium; and

WHEREAS, the Board originally named the University of Alabama’s football stadium in honor of Dr. George Hutcheson Denny, UA’s President from 1912-1936 and an ardent supporter of college athletics who spearheaded construction of the first on-campus stadium – where the team still plays today – and oversaw significant growth in enrollment and campus infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, after the 1926 Rose Bowl – the inspiration for the Rose Bowl reference in “Yea Alabama” in which the underdog Crimson Tide rallied from a 19-point deficit to defeat the University of Washington – Dr. Denny, in a May 1926 report to the Board, announced he set aside the proceeds from the game to create a fund for a future on-campus stadium:

Following an unusually successful football season in which we won for the second successive year the Southern Conference Championship, our team was invited to represent the East in the annual East-West game in [the] Rose Bowl, Pasadena, California. This was the first time a Southern team had been invited. Ten games had been played. The East had won only two. The eyes of the nation were fixed on Alabama. The game was played on New Year’s Day. The trip, therefore, involved little or no loss of time from college duties.

The net result of accepting the invitation was (1) that we won the game, and in winning it reflected honor on the South in general and on Alabama in particular, and (2) that we cleared approximately \$25,000 over and above expenses, and by so doing were enabled to set aside that sum as the nucleus of a

permanent Stadium Fund. This fund will grow as time advances and will constitute a guarantee that at some future date the first unit of a concrete stadium can be erected.

WHEREAS, the Crimson Tide also played in the 1927 Rose Bowl game, which resulted in a 7-7 tie with Stanford, and Dr. Denny added the proceeds to the previously created Stadium Fund; and

WHEREAS, in 1929, the on-campus stadium was completed, and the Board voted unanimously on October 5, 1929, to name it Denny Stadium:

[I]n our opinion, this tribute to Doctor Denny is but another evidence of a desire on the part of all of us who are connected with the University to express, in some way, our sense of the profound impression he has made on every phase of our University life, and on the moral, intellectual and physical life of the State.

WHEREAS, by resolution dated September 20, 1975, the Board approved changing the name from Denny Stadium to Bryant-Denny Stadium to honor legendary football coach Paul William “Bear” Bryant; and

WHEREAS, Coach Bryant played for the Crimson Tide from 1933 to 1935 and served as the head football coach from 1958 to 1982, winning 14 SEC Championships and six national championships; and

WHEREAS, a College Football Hall of Fame inductee, Coach Bryant amassed a then-record 323 wins during his head coaching career and cemented a legacy of excellence for Crimson Tide football;

WHEREAS, the Board now desires to honor another legendary football coach who made a lasting impact on the University of Alabama by naming Saban Field at Bryant-Denny Stadium; and

WHEREAS, a native of Monongah, West Virginia, and a first-generation college student, Coach Saban earned both a bachelor’s degree in business and a master’s degree in sports administration from Kent State University, where he also played football from 1970-1972; and

WHEREAS, he began his coaching career as a graduate assistant at Kent State and ultimately became the head coach for numerous programs, including Toledo (1990), Michigan State (1995-1999), LSU (2000-2004), and the Miami Dolphins (2005-2006); and

WHEREAS, his tenure at LSU included two SEC championships (2001, 2003) and a national championship (2003); and

WHEREAS, in 2007, he became the head football coach at the University of Alabama and led the Crimson Tide to extraordinary success in his 17 seasons, including a 108-9 record on the field that will now bear his name; and

WHEREAS, Coach Saban's record at Alabama also included 16 ten-win seasons, nine SEC championships, and six national championships; and

WHEREAS, Coach Saban's seven total national championships are the most by any head coach in the poll era of college football; and

WHEREAS, the Crimson Tide was ranked No. 1 in the Associated Press ("AP") poll for at least one week for 15 straight seasons, shattering the previous record of seven, and the Crimson Tide's 125 wins from 2010-2019 were the most by any Football Bowl Subdivision school – the highest level of college football – during a decade in the AP poll era; and

WHEREAS, a nine-time National Coach of the Year, Coach Saban's ability to recognize talent and develop players is equally remarkable, as he coached four Heisman Trophy winners – tied for the most ever – and a record 52 first-round draft picks in his career; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being widely recognized as one of the greatest coaches of all time, Coach Saban and Miss Terry, his beloved wife since 1971, also have positively impacted countless lives beyond college athletics, including in the Tuscaloosa community and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the Sabans have distributed over \$13 million to students, teachers, and children's causes at over 150 charities through the Nick's Kids Foundation, and with support and donations from the Sabans, St. Francis Catholic Church in Tuscaloosa opened the Saban Catholic Student Center in 2016; and

WHEREAS, the Sabans also have given generously to the University of Alabama, including over \$1 million to the University's first-generation scholars program and \$1 million to the Crimson Standard, a \$600 million capital campaign; and

WHEREAS, the Sabans also recently announced plans for construction of the Saban Center, a learning and discovery center that combines the Children's Hands-On Museum and the Tuscaloosa Children's Theater and was made possible through a \$3M gift from the Sabans and a \$2M gift from the Nick's Kids Foundation; and

WHEREAS, the Sabans are the proud parents of two children, Nicholas and Kristen, and two grandchildren, Amélie and James; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama that it hereby approves the naming of Saban Field at Bryant-Denny Stadium;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies be sent to Coach Saban, his family, UA Director of Athletics Greg Byrne, and UA President Dr. Stuart Bell;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be spread upon the permanent minutes of this Board.