With swimming and diving alumni leading the way, Yale has taken another step toward renovating its pool facility at Payne Whitney Gymnasium. The $47 million project, currently in the planning stage, will be fully donor funded.

To date, alumni have contributed $7 million for the complex.

Among the early donors are Katie Hazelwood and Todd Kaplan, both swimmers from the Class of 1986. Hazelwood is a two-time All American, a seven-time Eastern Seaboard champion, and the high point winner at the 1983 Women’s Eastern Seaboard Championships.

The husband and wife see this renovation as a timely opportunity for Yale’s varsity swimming and diving teams, as well as the pool’s many recreational users. “Yale has committed to building what is essentially a new pool at Payne Whitney Gym, a location that is central to the campus and the community,” Hazelwood said. “This will be a first-class facility, able to host major collegiate and amateur competitions. Todd and I are excited that the university is moving forward with a pool that will once again be a source of pride — this is the Yale way.”

A Marvel of Engineering

When Yale’s Robert J.H. Kiphuth Exhibition Pool opened in 1932, it was a marvel of engineering. Designed for intercollegiate competition, the 25-yard, 6-lane pool was placed at the bottom of a 50-foot-high funnel of 2,187 seats, spanned by a 157-foot wide ceiling. Upstairs was Yale’s practice pool — the world’s largest suspended natatorium — holding 310,000 gallons of water.

The facility has since seen numerous national competitions — including the NCAA and AAU championships — and today it is used constantly by men’s and women’s swimming and diving teams as well as members of the Yale community.

But major work is required to keep the complex in step with the evolving standards of intercollegiate sports.

A State-of-the-Art Facility

The showpiece of the renovation will be a larger exhibition pool — 50 meters long, 9 lanes wide, and a uniform 9 feet deep. Paired with a new, separate diving well, this pool will enable Yale to once again host an Ivy League championship and better position the swimming and diving teams to compete for the best recruits. The renovation will also support other varsity athletes who use the pool for conditioning, as well as recreational users such as club teams, faculty, staff, and members of the local community.

“I am so grateful that alumni are stepping forward to support this renovation, and I hope their example inspires others to contribute,” said Tom Beckett, director of athletics. “This project will restore our pool facilities to the top tier of the Ivy League.”