

MLB, REDS, AND PARTNERS LEAVE LASTING OUTREACH

BY BRENDA C. MCCASKILL (BRENDA@ABOUTGREATERCINNATI.COM)
PHOTOS BY ABOUTGREATERCINNATI.COM

Baseball love was on view and felt in the community during Major League Baseball (MLB) All-Star Week in Cincinnati. Leading up to the 86th MLB All-Star Game, that love and spirit of baseball was front and center in community outreach as the Major League Baseball All-Star Legacy projects, an 8 million dollar investment in local and national charitable endeavors, were unveiled throughout All-Star Week.

Designed to positively affect the lives of underserved youth and local veterans, as well as focus on improving the well-being of citizens in Greater Cincinnati and throughout Reds Country, the local legacy projects - youth baseball field renovations, a youth activity center, a veterans reintegration center, and a pediatric care waiting room - leaves a lasting impact and impression on Greater Cincinnati. Daily ribbon cuttings and dedications held during All-Star Week, showcased and unveiled all of the All-Star Legacy projects:

- Nine youth baseball fields throughout Reds Country renovated to expand use for youth and amateur players: Howell Field - Dayton, OH; Withrow High School Fields Cincinnati, OH; Meinken Field - Covington, KY; Don Johnson Field at the P&G Cincinnati MLB Urban Youth Academy - Cincinnati, OH; Queensgate Field - Cincinnati, OH;



Excited youth softball and baseball players take part in the Jr. RBI Classic 2015 Opening Ceremonies held at the Don Johnson Field, one of nine youth baseball fields renovated as part of the All-Star Legacy Projects.

and Dyer Fields - Cincinnati, OH);

- A new, 17,000 square ft activity center, which doubles the number of youth served, at the Larry & Rhonda Sheakley Boys & Girls Club in the Price Hill community in Cincinnati, OH;
- Upgraded existing space at the CityLink Center in Cincinnati, OH, offering a new veterans reintegration center to help veterans in the Greater Cincinnati area to facilitate a successful transition and reintegration into the community;
- A significant makeover project in partnership with Procter & Gamble, which included among other community center improvements major HVAC and roofing repairs and the

completion of an outdoor park at the vacant Sands School playground, at the Seven Hills Neighborhood Houses facility in the West End in Cincinnati with additional work at two nearby sites; and

- Improvements to the Pediatric Primary Care Waiting Room at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, which offers care annually to thousands of children from low-income families;

"There has never been an All-Star Game in my time" remarked MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred at the Meinken Field dedication in Covington, KY, "where the ownership of the local club has put in a greater effort in terms of making the event fantastic

Continued on Page 2

Click [here](#) to comment on this article.

Email story ideas/suggestions to editor@aboutgreatercincinnati.com.

[LIKE On Facebook](#)

[FOLLOW On Twitter](#)

MLB, REDS, AND PARTNERS LEAVE LASTING OUTREACH (CONT'D)

Chuck Harmon (seated) looks on as statue unveiled in his honor.



© 2015 AboutGreaterCincinnati.com

and leaving behind a legacy ...”

For instance, the Don Johnson Field at the P&G Cincinnati MLB Urban Youth Academy was not only a site for a legacy project field renovation but also the site to host the 2015 All-Star Jr. RBI (Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities) Classic, the 7th annual event held during All-Star Week. Despite partly cloudy, intermittent rainy conditions, there were smiles and positive vibes as bright as the sun at the Opening Ceremonies for the event which was moved indoors.

Designed to provide young baseball and softball RBI program participants, ages 11-12, from around

the country with an MLB all expense paid opportunity to be part of the MLB All-Star Week experience, the event brought 144 youth baseball/softball players and 36 coaches from twelve Jr. RBI teams (8 baseball, 4 softball), to Cincinnati. For some, it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

In addition to the Cincinnati Reds RBI team, participating teams came from 11 cities and 9 states representing all regions of the country: as far as San Francisco (CA) on the West Coast; to Paterson (NJ) on the East Coast; to Shreveport (LA) in the Deep South; and Cleveland (OH) in the Midwest.

Throughout the five day event, par-

ticipants engaged in a friendly, round-robin tournament; performed community service; roomed on the Xavier University campus; participated in breaking the Guinness Book of World Records for the largest game of catch; and attended MLB All-Star events including the Futures Game, Legends and Celebrity Softball Game, and Home Run Derby.

The Opening Ceremonies for the 2015 All-Star Jr. RBI Classic was also the setting for the unveiling of a statue of Chuck Harmon, the first African American baseball player for The Cincinnati Reds.

“The unveiling of Mr. Harmon’s statue is going to be a very special moment in Reds history.” remarked Charley Frank, Executive Director of the Reds Community Fund during the Jr. RBI Classic opening ceremony, “and we look forward to making that not only a permanent part of the Urban Youth Academy, but literally the front door to the baseball and softball fields.”

Harmon, 91 years young and Cincinnati living legend, was on-hand and humbled by the unveiling of the bronze statue in his likeness which greets young ballplayers and visitors at the entrance of the first-class, major league style, youth baseball complex in Roselawn.

The legacy lives on!

Got a comment on this article, [tell us](#).

Click [here](#) to comment on this article.

Email story ideas/suggestions to editor@aboutgreatercincinnati.com.

[LIKE On Facebook](#)

[FOLLOW On Twitter](#)

AboutGreaterCincinnati.com • West Chester, Ohio 45069 • info@AboutGreaterCincinnati.com

Copyright © 2008-2015 AboutGreaterCincinnati.com All rights reserved.