

# MAYORS



# PLAYBALL



A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL AND THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS



# 2018



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS



## **THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS**

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Mayor of Columbia, SC  
President

### **Bryan K. Barnett**

Mayor of Rochester Hills, MI  
Vice President

### **Greg Fischer**

Mayor of Louisville, KY  
Second Vice President

### **Tom Cochran**

CEO and Executive Director

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,393 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor.



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## **The 2018 Play Ball Summer was the most successful one to date.**

This year, the number of cities and mayors engaged with Play Ball increased, along with the number of youth engaged in Play Ball activities to 36,246 youth. Moreover, this year marked two landmark achievements in that more than 300 mayors from all 50 states officially took the pledge to “Play Ball”.

The year launched at the 86th annual Winter Meeting when Major League Baseball Commissioner Robert D. Manfred, Jr. announced the renewal of the Play Ball partnership with USCM. Shortly after this announcement, it was time to celebrate MLB Opening Day with “Claim the Crown”, where Mayors sent in pictures donning their favorite team’s hat, which they received courtesy of MLB and New Era. Next came the 86th Annual Meeting in Boston. It was here that Red Sox World Champion Keith Foulke had the opportunity to speak and pose with Mayors for special USCM baseball card pictures.

There were plenty of new cities which celebrated Play Ball this year, some of which held events in conjunction Major League Baseball and the MLB Players Alumni Association. Another new aspect of this year’s initiative was the collaboration with Boys and Girls Clubs of America, who assisted mayors by hosting and providing additional youth participants for mayoral events. There are descriptions in this report of mayoral events which can be used when planning 2019 Play Ball activities. Also included in the report are some examples of the Play Ball press clippings and mayoral social media posts showcasing how cities are renewing the enthusiasm in America’s youth for the game of baseball.





**FOR THE FIRST TIME MORE THAN 300  
MAYORS FROM ALL 50 UNITED STATES  
AND PUERTO RICO PLEDGED TO HOST  
2018 “PLAY BALL SUMMER” EVENTS.**

## **PLAY BALL CITIES/ MAYORS’ PLEDGED**

*(United States including Puerto Rico)*

**2015 125**

**2016 205**

**2017 255**

**2018 304**

## **MAYORAL IMPACT ON YOUTH ENGAGEMENT**

The 2018 Mayors Play Ball initiative engaged over **36,246** youth in reported events held all across the United States. This is an increase from the year prior.

As in past years the mayor’s planned innovative events for the community, and most cities partnered with their local little, minor, and Major League Baseball teams.

**2016 20,405**

**2017 35,136**

**2018 36,246**

\*USCM reported Play Ball events

# 2018 PLAY BALL CITIES

Addison, IL	Cayce, SC	Fort Myers, FL	Lakewood, OH	North Wilkesboro, NC	Seattle, WA
Aguadilla, PR	Cayey, PR	Fort Wayne, IN	Lansing, MI	Norwalk, CT	Socorro, TX
Akron, OH	Central Falls, RI	Fort Worth, TX	Largo, FL	Oakland, CA	South Bend, IN
Alameda, CA	Cerritos, CA	Frankfort, KY	Las Cruces, NM	Ocala, FL	South Gate, CA
Albany, NY	Champaign, IL	Frederick, MD	Las Vegas, NV	Oklahoma City, OK	Springfield, IL
Albuquerque, NM	Charleston, SC	Fremont, CA	Lauderdale Lakes, FL	Orland Park, IL	St. Louis, MO
Alexandria, LA	Charlotte, NC	Frisco, TX	Lauderhill, FL	Orlando, FL	St. Paul, MN
Alexandria, VA	Chattanooga, TN	Garland, TX	Laurel, MD	Orocovis, PR	St. Petersburg, FL
Aliso Viejo, CA	Cheyenne, WY	Gary, IN	Lexington, KY	Palm Bay, FL	Stockton, CA
Allentown, PA	Chicago, IL	Glendale Heights, IL	Lima, OH	Parkland, FL	Sumter, SC
Anaheim, CA	Cidra, PR	Grand Forks, ND	Lisle, IL	Pembroke Pines, FL	Syracuse, NY
Anchorage, AK	Cincinnati, OH	Green Bay, WI	Little Rock, AR	Pensacola, FL	Tacoma, WA
Apopka, FL	Clarksville, TN	Greenville, NC	Livermore, CA	Perry, GA	Tallahassee, FL
Arecibo, PR	Cleveland, OH	Gresham, OR	Lomita, CA	Philadelphia, PA	Tamarac, FL
Arlington, TX	College Station, TX	Gulfport, MS	Long Beach, CA	Pinellas Park, FL	Tampa, FL
Atlanta, GA	Colorado Springs, CO	Hagerstown, MD	Los Angeles, CA	Piscataway, NJ	Tempe, AZ
Attleboro, MA	Columbia, SC	Hamilton Township, NJ	Louisville, KY	Pittsburgh, PA	Texas City, TX
Auburn, WA	Columbus, OH	Hammond, IN	Macon, GA	Plainfield, NJ	Thornton, CO
Augusta, GA	Compton, CA	Hanover Park, IL	Madison, WI	Plano, TX	Tigard, OR
Austin, TX	Cooper City, FL	Hartford, CT	Manchester, NH	Pleasantville, NJ	Toa Baja, PR
Baltimore, MD	Culver City, CA	Hattiesburg, MS	Maui, HI	Ponce, PR	Toledo, OH
Bangor, ME	Dallas, TX	Helena, MT	McKinney, TX	Pontiac, MI	Topeka, KS
Barceloneta, PR	Davenport, IA	Hempstead, NY	Memphis, TN	Port Arthur, TX	Torrance, CA
Baton Rouge, LA	Davie, FL	Hendersonville, TN	Merced, CA	Port St. Lucie, FL	Trenton, NJ
Beaumont, TX	Dayton, OH	Hialeah, FL	Mesa, AZ	Portland, OR	Trotwood, OH
Beaverton, OR	Denver, CO	Hialeah Gardens, FL	Miami, FL	Providence, RI	Tuscaloosa, AL
Benton Harbor, MI	Des Moines, IA	Hillsboro, OR	Miami Beach, FL	Quincy, IL	Union Township, NJ
Beverly Hills, CA	Detroit, MI	Hoffman Estates, IL	Miami Gardens, FL	Racine, WI	Vallejo, CA
Binghamton, NY	Dolton, IL	Holland, MI	Milford, CT	Rancho Cordova, CA	Virginia Gardens, FL
Birmingham, AL	Doral, FL	Honolulu, HI	Milwaukee, WI	Rapid City, SD	Walnut Creek, CA
Bonita Springs, FL	Douglasville, GA	Hope, NJ	Minneapolis, MN	Reno, NV	Warren, MI
Boston, MA	Dubuque, IA	Hopkinsville, KY	Mobile, AL	Rialto, CA	Warren, OH
Bound Brook, NJ	Durham, NC	Hormigueros, PR	Moreno Valley, CA	Richmond, VA	Washington, DC
Branson, MO	East Orange, NJ	Houston, TX	Mount Vernon, NY	Richmond, CA	Waterloo, IA
Bridgeport, CT	Eden Prairie, MN	Humacao, PR	Naguabo, PR	Riverbank, CA	West Covina, CA
Brockton, MA	Edina, MN	Huntington, WV	Naranjito, PR	Rochester, NY	West Haven, CT
Broken Arrow, OK	Elizabeth, NJ	Independence, MO	Nashville, TN	Rochester, MN	West Hollywood, CA
Brooklyn Center, MN	Elk Grove, CA	Indianapolis, IN	New Albany, IN	Rochester Hills, MI	West Palm Beach, FL
Brownsville, TX	Eugene, OR	Irvine, CA	New Bedford, MA	Rocklin, CA	Westlake, OH
Buffalo, NY	Everett, MA	Irving, TX	New Brunswick, NJ	Roseville, CA	Westland, MI
Burbank, CA	Ewing Township, NJ	Ithaca, NY	New Orleans, LA	Sacramento, CA	Wichita, KS
Burlington, VT	Fairbanks, AK	Jersey City, NJ	New York, NY	Salisbury, NC	Wilmington, DE
Burnsville, MN	Fairbanks North	Johns Creek, GA	Newark, NJ	Salt Lake City, UT	Winston-Salem, NC
Burton, MI	Star Borough, AK	Kalamazoo, MI	Newport Beach, CA	San Antonio, TX	Wisconsin Rapids, WI
Cabo Rojo, PR	Fargo, ND	Kansas City, KS	Newport News, VA	San Diego, CA	Woodbury, MN
Calabasas, CA	Fayetteville, NC	Kansas City, MO	Newton, MA	San Leandro, CA	Woodland, CA
Camden, NJ	Fillmore, IL	Kearney, NE	Niagara Falls, NY	Santa Ana, CA	Woodmere, OH
Canóvanas, PR	Findlay, OH	Kearny, NJ	Normal, IL	Santa Fe, NM	Yonkers, NY
Carmel, IN	Flint, MI	Kinston, NC	North Charleston, SC	Santa Monica, CA	York, PA
Carrboro, NC	Florida, PR	Knoxville, TN	North Miami, FL	Schaumburg, IL	Yuba City, CA
Carson, CA	Fontana, CA	Lajas, PR	North Miami Beach, FL	Schenectady, NY	





USCM President Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin plays with participants during his mayoral event.



Tony Reagins, MLB Executive Vice President, Baseball & Softball Development, helps a play ball participant.



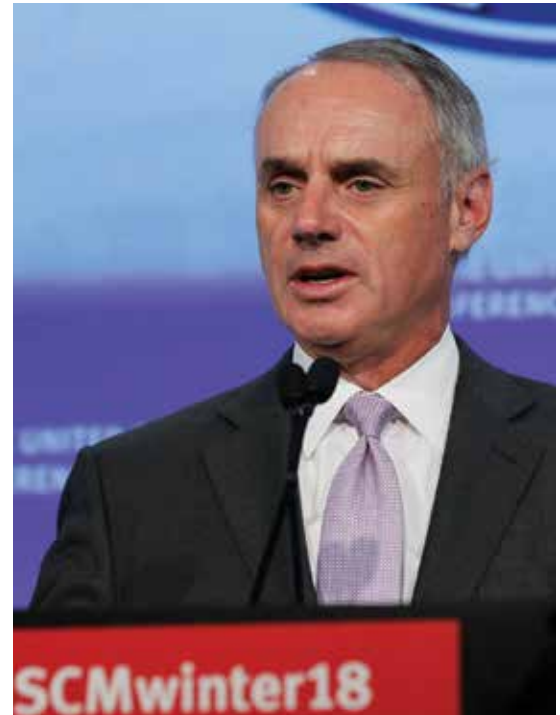
Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson invited a group of youth participants from the local recreation center to City Hall for a Play Ball proclamation ceremony.

# 86<sup>TH</sup> WINTER MEETING IN WASHINGTON, DC

Major League Baseball Commissioner Robert D. Manfred, Jr. addressed the 86th Winter Meeting, and announced a three-year renewal of the Play Ball partnership between USCM and Major League Baseball. Washington Nationals mascots Abraham Lincoln & George Washington joined the mayors and USCM leadership to launch the summer initiative.

*“Our program has grown each year since 2015, and our partnership has become a truly strong one. I’m really excited to be here today to announce that we’ve decided to renew our partnership for an additional three years, through 2020.”*

-- MLB Commissioner Robert D. Manfred, Jr.



MLB Commissioner Robert D. Manfred, Jr. announces the renewal of USCM and MLB's Play Ball partnership.

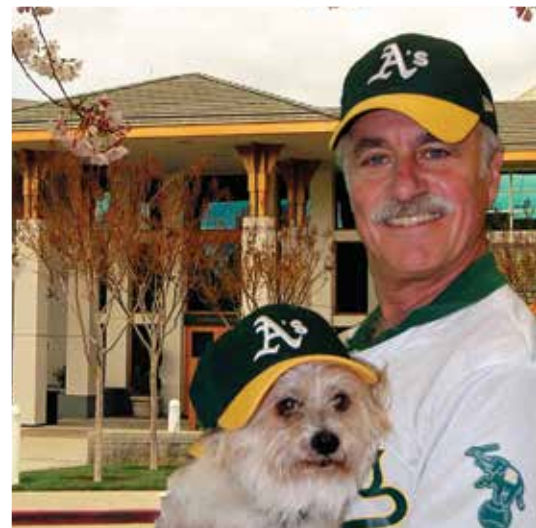
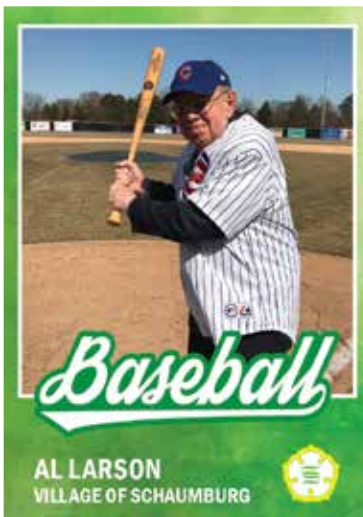


Dubuque Mayor Roy Buol poses with the Washington Nationals Mascots as part of the Play Ball winter meeting launch activities.



USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran, Boys & Girls of America CEO Jim Clark, MLB Commissioner Robert D. Manfred, Jr., USC Past President New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, Washington D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, and USC President Columbia (SC) Mayor Steve Benjamin launch the 2018 Play Ball program.







# CAPS ON!



## CAPS ON MLB OPENING DAY

This year we had over 260+ Mayors signed up by MLB Opening Day 2018. Caps On was celebrated by mayors, who wore their favorite team caps and shared their support of the game of baseball with constituents on a variety of social media platforms.

**2016 - 80**

**2017 - 210+**

**2018 - 260+**

# 86<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING IN BOSTON

Vice President of Community Affairs for Major League Baseball, Tom Brasuell stopped by the meeting in Boston to give an update on Play Ball's partnership with Major League Baseball, as well as to officially launch of Play Ball Summer. Tom was joined by former MLB All-Star and Boston Red Sox world champion Keith Foulke.



MLB Vice President of Community Affairs Tom Brasuell with former Major League All-Star, Reliever of the Year award winner, and 2004 Red Sox World Champion, Keith Foulke.



MLB Vice President of Community Affairs Tom Brasuell shows the mayors the new 2018 Play Ball Summer t-shirts.



Mayors had the opportunity to get their own commemorative Play Ball Baseball card.



# 2018 ALL-STAR GAME, WASHINGTON, DC



Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, Mo'ne Davis, First girl pitcher to pitch a win and shutout in the Little League World Series and Ward 6 DC Council member Charles Allen participate in the mayoral event for local children held July 13, 2018 at Play Ball Park.



PLAY BALL Park, was a free All-Star Week attraction accessible to children and families. PLAY BALL Park hosted the various youth and fan engagement efforts during All-Star Week, which included two new youth baseball and softball tournaments comprised of teams from MLB Youth Academies.

*"It's important for us to get kids and have them active, out of the house, away from electronics, getting to know their friends, getting some sun, some exercise and learning about nutrition... Competition and fair play – that's what baseball allows them to do. It's a sport that will carry them throughout their lives."*

--Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser





# 2018 PLAY BALL SUMMER



# NEW CITIES CELEBRATE PLAY BALL

We were pleased to welcome more than 50 new registrants to this summer's Play Ball initiative. Additionally, we were finally able to break the threshold and have representatives from all 50 states and Puerto Rico be a part of Play Ball. Every year these new cities find unique ways to celebrate and take part in the initiative. Below are a few examples:



## Fairbanks, AK

Fairbanks Mayor Jim Matherly partnered with Major League Baseball this summer around the 113th Midnight Sun Game. They dedicated an entire 24 hours to Play Ball, which was filled with various baseball and softball activities for more than 300 children of all ages. These activities were for both the novice and experienced youth players. Both USA Baseball and USA Softball were present at the event, along with Major League Baseball's partners American Legion Baseball and PONY Baseball/Softball. The day culminated with the annual Midnight Sun Game which featured the Alaska Goldpanners and the Orange County Surf.



## Cheyenne, WY

USCM Play Ball's maiden voyage in Wyoming was held in conjunction with Major League Baseball and the MLB Players Alumni Association. At Mayor Marian J. Orr's event, there were plenty of activities for youth between the ages of 5-16, including camps and an annual high school tournament. The event featured former Major League players who helped teach the youth many of the important skills and terminology necessary to be a success at the sport. The event ended up engaging over 100 youth, and a great time was had by all.



## Manchester, NH

This summer also marked USCM's first event in New Hampshire. This event was held in conjunction with Boys & Girls Club of Manchester and the Manchester Fisher Cats (Double-A affiliate of the Toronto Blue Jays). Mayor Joyce Craig came out, along with two players from the Fisher Cats, the team president, and their mascot. Mayor Craig pitched to youth, and the participants received instruction from Fisher Cats players.



# BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

This year, to help boost youth engagement, USCM encouraged mayors to work with their local Boys & Girls Clubs (BGC) for Play Ball Summer. Many of the BGCs have hosted Play Ball events in the past, and were able to support with their event knowledge, and youth attendees to contribute to a greater youth impact in 2018. Cities who need assistance with contacting their local BGC for the 2019 Play Ball Summer initiative, please reach out to USCM and we will work with our national BGC contacts to identify the best point of contact for your local club.



## Fontana, CA

Mayor Acquanetta Warren worked with Boys & Girls Club of Fontana to put on a special Play Ball day. The event had 400 youth and was filled with special guests including: AfterShock the mascot for the Rancho Cucamonga Quakes, Single-A affiliate of the Los Angeles Dodgers, and softball legend Kim Waleszon-Cecil who starred for Fontana High School. The event was aimed at youth with varying levels of exposure and skill in baseball and softball, but ended up being a rousing success.



## Portland, OR

Mayor Tom Wheeler, in conjunction with the Boys & Girls Club of Portland Metropolitan Area, Friends of Baseball, the Portland Pickles, & Portland Park & Rec hosted the second annual Play Ball event with 175 youth. The youth enjoyed various skills stations at this clinic, free hot dogs, and a host of family-friendly activities to celebrate the growth of baseball in Portland.

# A UNIQUE APPROACH TO PLAY BALL

Play Ball is about more than simply teaching youth about the proper skills and terminology of baseball and softball. It's also about stressing the importance of lessons that can be taught in emotional, social, & physical development. One city, Carrboro, North Carolina took a different approach to Play Ball this summer. Carrboro Mayor Lydia Lavelle posed a question to local youth: "What does baseball/ softball mean to you?" Youth then submitted writing samples answering this prompt, with three winners in different age brackets (elementary, middle, and high school) being chosen and rewarded with tickets to a Durham Bulls game. In addition, they were introduced to the community at a local Board meeting. Below are the winning submissions.



## What Baseball Means to Me

By Jackson Schooff

I love baseball when the crowds go wild,  
That's what I like, it makes me smile.  
I love when I hear the crack of the bat,  
And all the outfielders, they run back.  
And if there is, one home run,  
We all clap to the beat of the drum.  
We stand in line for a hotdog and bun,  
That part, is also fun.  
I love baseball when I walk in the gate,  
You should come too, that would be great!

## The softball girl by: Rose Kohout 🥰

She slides on her helmet and closes her eyes with one slow breath  
As a flock of birds wonder about  
The swirls of color start to show in the beaming sky  
As the night starts to slow  
She steps up to the bat without a doubt  
With a field full of chatter  
A small smile in the crowd  
Her eye stuck to the ball in the pitchers glove  
Silence spreads, as the ball swivels in the wispy air  
Soon a swing and a loud pat  
Up in the air the ball goes  
Team proud  
And out of the park  
With a blink of an eye she ran across the field  
The scoreboard turns...  
Home run!  
The team cheers in satisfaction  
Being part of a loving team  
And a amazing passion  
Her smile beams  
Joy of being  
The winning team  
The american dream



## BASEBALL AND FAMILY

*by Paul Moracco*

Scoring the winning run is like coming home  
at the end of a long day  
to see the faces of those you love, waiting.

Family trips to new places  
are like are playing at a new field  
that is still unknown and exciting.

Playing catch creates a bond  
that cannot be broken  
and will only grow.

Life with your family can be frustrating sometimes,  
like the feeling you get  
after striking out for the fifth time.

Sometimes, it is like being walked on four pitches,  
because you got on base, but you didn't really do anything,  
so it doesn't feel that great.

Maybe you didn't want to watch *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*  
for the tenth time with your mom, but like a sacrifice fly,  
sometimes you do things for the greater good.

Because at the end of the day, what matters is that the team wins, not you.  
The best hitters will get a hit 3/10 times. Your family will all agree even less frequently,  
but what matters is that you keep pushing and don't let failure get the better of you.

You can't be mad for very long playing baseball, because pretty soon you'll be up to bat again,  
or a ball is hit to you and you make the play and feel better,  
just like how a fight with your family is resolved the next morning.

The experiences you have with your family are unforgettable,  
ingrained forever into your memory,  
like the feeling of hitting the ball just right and seeing it go flying like it'll never land.

Through the game-winning hits, and game-ending strikeouts, the good experiences and the bad,  
there is nothing I wouldn't give up for my family,  
because at the end of the day, they're the ones who are always cheering for me.

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM SELECT MAYORAL EVENTS HELD DURING 2018 PLAY BALL

## Columbia, SC

USCM President Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin partnered with the Columbia Fireflies, Class A affiliate of the New York Mets, for an afternoon event at a Fireflies game. During the game's 7<sup>th</sup> inning stretch, Mayor Benjamin, along with 42 local Columbia youth, celebrated Play Ball.

## Rochester Hills, MI

USCM Vice President Rochester Hills Mayor Bryan K. Barnett, in conjunction with Rochester Avon Recreation Authority hosted the *Night Under the Lights* with a group of youth ages 8-14. At this event youth had the opportunity to participate in a Pitch, Hit, & Run competition, learn new skills and further develop their existing skills.

## Louisville, KY

USCM Second Vice President Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer and the Louisville Parks and Recreation Department hosted a Play Ball event. Prior to a Louisville Bats (the Triple-A affiliate of the Cincinnati Reds) game, 350 youth from the local community center participated in a pre-game skills clinic at Louisville Slugger Field. After the clinic the youth attended the game with Mayor Fischer, and for many, got to have their first experience attending a baseball game.

## Burnsville, MN

USCM Past President Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth B. Kautz hosted a Play Ball event in conjunction with International Day and the Minnesota Twins. The day's events aimed to not only expose the youth of Burnsville to both baseball and softball, but also to celebrate diversity in the city and amongst the diverse youth participants.

## Reno, NV

Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve partnered with the Reno Aces (Triple A affiliate of the Arizona Diamondbacks) on a special Play Ball event. The event allowed the youth of Reno and their families to play catch on the field before an Aces Game, as part of the team's Father's Day celebrations. This allowed many fans the unique opportunity to play on a professional field and celebrate the ones they love on one of the nation's more prominent family holidays.

## Elizabeth, NJ

Elizabeth Mayor J. Christian Bollwage and the Department of Parks & Recreation held events for the youth of Elizabeth to celebrate baseball and softball. The Play Ball event was held at a municipal park and attended by local coaches, former players, and elected officials. Local leaders gave remarks about the importance of baseball. Mayor Bollwage guided the youth in some batting drills and umpired a softball game following the event.







## **Boston, MA**

Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh attended a “Red Sox and Boston Public Schools Ballcap Giveaway with David Ortiz” on Wednesday April 4, 2018 at Hurley K-8 School in the South End neighborhood of Boston. Mayor Walsh spoke, introduced David Ortiz to the kids, and distributed caps to over 200 kids. It was the official launch of a city-wide donation of Red Sox hats to over 45,000 Boston Public Schools students and staff. The donation is part of the Boston Red Sox “Calling All Kids” effort to connect baseball to the next generation of fans.

## **Cleveland, OH**

Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson invited a group of youth participants from the local recreation center to City Hall. While at City Hall the youth had a meet and greet with Mayor Jackson and discussed the importance of baseball and softball and were presented with a proclamation about Cleveland’s status as a Play Ball City.

## **Orlando, FL**

Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer celebrated the launch of the new baseball season with 80 youth from Orlando’s after school programs. During the event, multiple sandlot-inspired games were held to help teach youth about the fundamentals of baseball and softball.

## **South Bend, IN**

South Bend Mayor Peter Buttigieg in partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of St. Joseph County and the South Bend Cubs (Class- A affiliate of the Chicago Cubs) hosted a Play Ball event. Mayor Buttigieg, Cubs players hosted a catch with a group of youth from the Boys & Girls Club summer program.

## **Norwalk, CT**

Norwalk Mayor Harry Rilling incorporated Play Ball into the city’s summer camp program. Reaching over 650 youth from six separate schools over the summer, the city’s Play Ball program was a rousing success. Each day of the week, Mayor Rilling visited a different camp and helped teach the fundamentals of base running while also playing catch with the youth.

## **Irvine, CA**

Irvine Mayor Donald Wagner opened a new, state-of-the-art baseball facility in September. The event featured a speaking portion featuring Mayor Wagner and former Angel and MLB Hall of Famer Rod Carew.







## Play ball!

Christopher Kelzur  
Monday, July 02, 2018

Gresham Mayor Shane Benis pitched to children during Play Ball Gresham, an event that allowed elementary school-age students to participate in a free baseball clinic, Thursday afternoon, June 28, at Main City Park, 219 S. Main Ave.

The more than 100 kids, ages 5 to 13, got to try out different baseball skill stations manned by Gresham GreyWolves players.

There were hot dogs for lunch, favor bags filled with goodies like a voucher to the next GreyWolves game, shirts and a final round of whiffle ball with the mayor and other city staff.

The plan is to continue Play Ball Gresham in the future, trying to make it even bigger next year.



LOCAL NEWS BUSINESS LIFESTYLE EVENTS OUTDOORS

## Play Ball with the mayor at this community event

August 6, 2018

NEWPORT NEWS — Play ball with Mayor McKinley Price at TowneBank Athletic Park on Aug. 15. From 5-8 p.m. enjoy free fun, including baseball drills/contests, free hot dogs and chips, face painting, giant slide and obstacle course, Newport News Police Department and Pals activities and a dunk tank with Price. The event is part of the United States Conference of Mayors' continued support of Major League Baseball's "Play Ball" Initiative, according to a news release from the city.



The "Play Ball" initiative focuses on the fun nature of baseball and encourages widespread participation in related activities, according to the news release. Mayors all across America are implementing the initiative throughout the summer with the goal of strengthening the connection between communities and the national pastime.

TowneBank Athletic Park is located next to the South Morrison Family Education Center, 741 Adams Drive. The event is sponsored by Coudine Cakes by Nika, Strimp Shack Newmarket, FAST324601 Yorktown and Boys & Girls Clubs of the Virginia Peninsula.

## Mayors Play Ball teaches kids baseball from the best

By Liz Moomey

September 10, 2018

SALISBURY — College baseball and softball players taught kids how to play ball Saturday at Mayors Play Ball at Catawba College.

The free baseball and softball camp gave 7- to 15-year-olds the opportunity to learn agility, hitting, playing outfield and infield, catching, pitching and running bases. Heath Mitchem, a senior outfielder, has been leading the camp for three years.

"It's fun to see how simple baseball can be," Mitchem said. "We're out here playing at the collegiate level, and sometimes you get away from how fun baseball is. A day like today is fun to teach kids fundamentals and get back to the roots of baseball being fun."

Jim Ganitt, head coach of Catawba College's baseball team, said the student athletes enjoy hosting the camp as much as the kids enjoy participating in it.

"We're all kids," Ganitt said. "They seem to have more fun. They're a little bit nervous when they come. College students seem to have more fun with it."

For Mitchem, teaching kids how to play baseball reminds him of when he started playing at age 5.

"When I was around their age, I went to a Catawba baseball camp," Mitchem said. "I remember the players looking so big and older and how scary they were. It just brought me back to being a little kid again."

Ganitt said Mayors Play Ball can jump-start a kid's love for baseball or softball.

"A lot of these guys and girls on the team, they came from the same places," Ganitt said. "For some reason, somebody got them a start with the sport and introduced it to them and fell in love with it and came to college to play and get your education."

Ganitt said this year's participation was on the lower side, with six or seven players to a kid.

"It's a great thing," Ganitt said. "I wish we could get more out here, more numbers out here. It is free. No obligation; just come have fun and learn the game. It was a good day."

Mayors Play Ball is hosted by Salisbury Mayor Al Higgins and is part of the United States Conference of Mayors support of the Major League Baseball's Play Ball Summer initiative. For more information, visit [PlayBall.org](http://PlayBall.org).

## Rochester Hills Set to "Play Ball" October 17

OCTOBER 15, 2018

### City Partners with Major League Baseball for Fun and Free Event

With baseball playoffs captivating the nation, Mayor Bryan K. Barnett has partnered with the Rochester Avon Recreation Authority (RARA) and Major League Baseball to host the *Night Under the Lights* event. Night Under the Lights has been scheduled for October 17 at 7:00 p.m. at Earl E. Borden Park in Rochester Hills.



At this event, boys and girls ages 8-14 will have a fun opportunity to grab their mitts and participate in a pitch, hit, and run skills competition under the lights.

This event was inspired by the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) partnership with Major League Baseball for the Play Ball Initiative. The Play Ball initiative focuses on the fun nature of baseball and encourages widespread participation in related activities.

As Vice President of the United States Conference of Mayors, Mayor Barnett is committed to creating a community event that will encourage families to get outside and get involved in America's pastime.

"We're excited to give the new generation of baseball and softball players a chance to try out their skills," states Mayor Bryan K. Barnett. "We look forward to this exciting event and are happy to partner with RARA to celebrate America's favorite pastime."

To sign up to participate in the Night Under the Lights, young residents can register at [www.rochesterhills.org/playball](http://www.rochesterhills.org/playball). This event is free and open to the public. Walk ins interested in playing are also welcome.

Home News Weather Entertainment What We Do Wyoming Primary

The City of Cheyenne and Mayor Marian Orr will host clinics on Saturday, July 7th as part of the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) continued support of the "PLAY BALL SUMMER" initiative, which focuses on the fun nature of baseball and encourages an active and healthy lifestyle for kids in all communities. During the Summer of 2018 Mayors are implementing the initiative throughout cities with the goal of strengthening the connection of communities with the National Pastime.

As part of Cheyenne's involvement, the City will host a free youth clinic and a free coaches clinic. The Legends for Youth Kids Clinic will take place from 9:00am-12:00pm at Mike Lansing Ball Field (4212 Converse Ave.) with former Major League Baseball players conducting the clinic to teach fundamentals of the game. The event is open to individuals 6-16 years old.

Baseball ACE will serve as an educational program clinic for any and all individuals who are currently coaching baseball or aspire to coach baseball at any level of the game. The clinic will take place at 4211 Converse Ave. from 12:00pm-3:00 p.m. More information on both clinics is attached.

In addition to the two clinics, the Post 6 Firecracker Tournament will take place on Saturday at Powers Field and Pioneer Park. Public access to the South Fields at Cheyenne Junior League will also be available as part of festivities on a first come, first serve basis.

Mayors across the country are hosting activities with a baseball and softball theme to engage citizens, families, and city departments through individual and community events (such as playing catch, running bases in the backyard, family gatherings, park and recreation activities, business-supported activities, etc.). These activities will be focused on exposing children to baseball and softball while providing a fun opportunity to remain active throughout the summer.

The PLAY BALL SUMMER initiative with the USCM focuses on recruiting cities to promote and support PLAY BALL through the use of baseball or softball-related activities. Primary targets are cities with Major League and Minor League Baseball clubs, although the initiative toolkit and self-reporting strategy will be electronically distributed to hundreds of cities across the country with the assistance of Major League Baseball. Local leaders and citizens will report their activities to [PLAYBALL.org](http://PLAYBALL.org) via [usmayors.org](http://usmayors.org). The site provides parents, coaches and kids with information on how to get involved with PLAY BALL activities as well as how to join community baseball and softball leagues. Coaching tips and video tutorials from Major League Baseball players and coaches are also a prominent component of the site.

## ANNUAL PLAY BALL EVENT (NEWPORT NEWS)

August 6, 2018

It's not every day you get to dunk your mayor in a dunk tank! The 4th Annual Play Ball event in Newport News takes place this Wednesday!



Where: TowneBank Athletic Field next to the South Morrison Family Education Center (741 Adams Drive, Newport News, VA 23601)

When: Wednesday, August 8, 2018 from 5-8pm (rain date is August 15)

Cost: Free!

Description: Join Newport News Mayor McKinley L. Price for an evening of FREE fun including baseball drills/contests, free hot dogs and chips, face painting, giant slide and obstacle course, Newport News Police Department and Pals activities, and a dunk tank with Mayor Price.

# The Courier

## "Play Ball!" with Findlay Mayor Lydia Mihalik

September 17, 2018

Findlay Mayor Lydia Mihalik will host a "Play Ball!" event on Sunday night at the Blanchard Valley Health System Miracle Park.

People of all ages can play wiffle ball and enjoy hotdogs and drinks from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The event is free.

Mihalik is a member of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which is supporting an initiative by Major League Baseball, Minor League Baseball, USA Baseball and USA Softball to provide play opportunities to youth in communities across America and Puerto Rico.

The initiative focuses on the fun nature of baseball and encourages an active and healthy lifestyle for children.

News Politics County by County



## Johns Creek to host 'Play Ball' event Aug. 22

Aug 08, 2018

By David Ibatu

Johns Creek Mayor Mike Bodker later this month will host the Play Ball Summer initiative of the U.S. Conference of Mayors to provide play opportunities for youth interested in baseball and softball.

The free event is scheduled for 11 a.m. to noon Saturday, Aug. 25, at Ocee Park, 10900 Buice Road. Prizes will be given out while supplies last. Registration is not required.

The promotion "focuses on the fun nature of baseball and encourages an active and healthy lifestyle for kids in all communities," according to an announcement of the event.

The mayors' conference is supporting the promotion with Major League Baseball, Minor League Baseball, USA Baseball and USA Softball. Information: [www.usmayors.org/play-ball](http://www.usmayors.org/play-ball)





**SOUTH BEND, Ind. (WNUD)** It was a fun morning filled with baseball for the Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Joseph County.



Players from the South Bend Cubs, mascot Swoosh and Mayor Pete Buttigieg played ball with the kids.

It's all part of the national "PLAY BALL" initiative which encourages kids to have healthy lifestyles by playing baseball or softball.

Buttigieg says he hopes this initiative will become an annual thing in South Bend. He says the event is not only perfect for the kids, but for the players too.

"I think it's fun for the players too. The players from the Cubs, they come from all over the country, and for them to get to know the community better while they're here, get to know kids, form relationships, I think that's really important for the team but also for the community," Buttigieg explains.

Hundreds of mayors throughout the country have participated in the Play Ball initiative since it launched in 2015.

## CHALLENGER

### City R-Centers, Red Wings Bring Play Ball Initiative to Rochester

July 15, 2018



Mayor Lovely A. Warren and Rochester Red Wings President Naomi Silver are proud to announce that the Play Ball Initiative will be at the Frederick Douglass R-Center, at 999 South Ave. from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, July 18. The Play Ball Initiative will provide Rochester youth an opportunity to learn baseball skills at a clinic hosted by Rochester Red Wings players. The event will be open to the public.

Registration and warm-ups for this event will take place from 10 to 11 a.m. The clinic with Red Wings players will take place from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. and a free lunch will be provided from 12 to 1 p.m. Spectators will also be on hand to help out.

"The Rochester Red Wings have been a true community partner for so many years and I am very grateful that they have agreed to be part of the Play Ball Initiative," said Mayor Warren. "We are all excited to bring the team and community together to encourage kids to get up, get active and enjoy the great game of baseball. Collaborations among the City and institutions like the Red Wings better our efforts to create more jobs, safer and more vibrant neighborhoods and better educational opportunities for our citizens."

The Red Wings are very happy to partner with Mayor Warren and the City of Rochester on the Play Ball Initiative," said Red Wings President Silver. "Our players and Spectators are looking forward to working with the young people of Rochester and enjoying an appreciation of baseball among our next generation of fans."

The Play Ball Initiative program was launched in 2017 by Major League Baseball and the United States Conference of Mayors in order to "strengthen communities and promote a love for baseball and softball." For more information about the Play Ball Initiative, visit [www.usamayors.org/playball](http://www.usamayors.org/playball).



## DC Mayor pays visit to PLAY BALL Park

By Alyson Footer MLB.com @alysonfooter

Jul. 13th, 2018 WASHINGTON -- Earlier this year, the United States Conference of Mayors renewed its pledge with Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred to continue "PLAY BALL Summer," aimed at growing youth baseball across all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

Among the dozens of city leaders who supported extending the agreement through 2020 is Washington D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, who visited PLAY BALL Park near Nationals Park on Friday for a tour of the kid-friendly facility, open for free play every day leading up to the 89th MLB All-Star Game on Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. ET on FOX.

"It's important for us to get kids and have them active, out of the house, away from electronics, getting to know their friends, getting some sun, some exercise and learning about nutrition," Mayor Bowser said. "Competition and fair play -- that's what baseball allows them to do. It's a sport that will carry them throughout their lives."

PLAY BALL Park, a free All-Star Week attraction accessible to children and families, provides a festive environment amid the backdrop of the annual Midsummer Classic. PLAY BALL Park is headlining the various youth and fan engagement efforts throughout Washington during All-Star Week, which includes two new youth baseball and softball tournaments comprised of teams from MLB Youth Academies -- The All-Star Commissioner's Cup & Jennie Finch Classic.

Measuring more than 145,000 square feet, PLAY BALL Park is located at The Yards at the Capitol Riverfront (Parcel A, Lot 854 Square, located at the intersection of First and M Streets). The festive space includes a youth-sized turf diamond featuring daily scheduled programming and open play as well as batting tunnels, pitching inflatables, a "Strikeball Alley," food trucks and MLB sponsor-activation zones.



## Mayor Rilling Kicks Off Play Ball Summer

July 10, 2018



This week, Norwalk Mayor Harry Rilling kicked-off "PLAY BALL SUMMER" in Norwalk. The United States Conference of Mayors continued its support of the "PLAY BALL SUMMER" initiative, which focuses on the fun nature of baseball and encourages an active and healthy lifestyle for young people in all communities. Mayor Rilling is one of five Mayors in Connecticut, and one of 304 in the United States, to sign up for "PLAY BALL." Mayor Rilling visited Tracey Elementary School on Monday, Marvin Elementary School on Tuesday, and will attend additional Norwalk camps during the week.

"Whether it's the smack of a ball hitting the glove, or the aroma of fresh cut grass filling the air, baseball is the perfect summer game," said Mayor Rilling. "I am delighted to participate in 'PLAY BALL SUMMER' and spend time with our youth at these camps. It's a joy spending my morning with the young people and sharing my love of the game with a future generation of fans."

During the summer, Mayors are implementing "PLAY BALL SUMMER" throughout cities across the country with the goal of strengthening the connection of communities with the game of baseball and softball. Norwalk is proud to continue its support of the "PLAY BALL" initiative, which first began in 2015. This year, more than 650 youngsters participated. In Norwalk, Hearst Connecticut Media Group is the lead sponsor of "PLAY BALL."

The "PLAY BALL SUMMER" initiative with the United States Conference of Mayors focuses on recruiting cities to promote and support "PLAY BALL" through the use of baseball or softball-related activities. Mayors across the country are hosting activities with a baseball and softball theme to engage residents, families, and city departments through individual and community events. These activities focus on exposing young people to baseball and softball while providing a fun opportunity to remain active throughout the summer.

Follow along with the fun on social media by searching for the hashtag #MayorsPlayBall. For more information on the initiative, visit [www.usamayors.org](http://www.usamayors.org) or [www.playball.org](http://www.playball.org).

## Arlington Patch

### Washington Nationals Mascot Screech the Eagle Flew the Coop @ScreechtheEagle Crossed the Potomac to Ben Brenman Park to Join Mayor Allison Silberberg and Alexandria Youth for Play Ball Summer

August 9, 2018

Washington Nationals Mascot, Screech the Eagle, flew the coop this week, crossing the Potomac to join Alexandria, Virginia Mayor Allison Silberberg and dozens of local children to "PLAY BALL," a summertime initiative organized by Major League Baseball (MLB) and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. The kids, all campers with Alexandria's Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, came to Ben Brenman Park to practice their batting and pitching skills and enjoy in the classic summertime game of baseball.

Mayor Silberberg joined with @ScreechtheEagle and the kids to take a turn at bat, as she kicked off PLAY BALL SUMMER. Mayor Silberberg is one of more than 300 mayors from all 50 United States and Puerto Rico to participate in the U.S. Conference of Mayors PLAY BALL SUMMER program by organizing community-based events that engage citizens, families, and city departments to participate in fun-focused baseball & softball activities.

"PLAY BALL SUMMER has been a 'win-win' for everyone involved, including the mayors, Major League Baseball and, most importantly, our kids who are being exposed to one of America's favorite pastimes. Last year, more than 250 mayors hosted over 35,000 kids in Play Ball events across America, and that level of engagement is only expected to increase this year, with even more mayors taking the PLAY BALL Pledge," said Tom Cochran, CEO & Executive Director, U.S. Conference of Mayors.

MLB Baseball Commissioner Robert D. Manfred, Jr. said: "The partnership with the U.S. Conference of Mayors is a significant factor for the success of our PLAY BALL Initiative. The central focus of our effort has always been to engage communities that love our game with opportunities for young people to participate in baseball and softball activities. By reaching all 50 states and Puerto Rico, PLAY BALL has truly become a national movement. We thank all the Mayors for their extraordinary commitment."

Launched in 2015, the PLAY BALL initiative is baseball's collective effort to encourage young people and communities to engage in baseball- or softball-related activities, including formal leagues, special events and casual forms of play. PLAY BALL events have become MLB's signature youth engagement activity during the professional and amateur baseball and softball calendar, especially on key dates throughout MLB's Championship Season and through the Postseason & World Series. PLAY BALL events demonstrate the positive way the game can serve as an outlet for physical activity, fun with friends and learning how to play the sport at its most basic levels. PLAY BALL also serves as the League's youth umbrella in which all associated programs and events derive from the initiative's consistent, simple message: <However You Play Ball, PLAY BALL!> [PlayBall.org](http://PlayBall.org) is the PLAY BALL initiatives online home and is accessible via [MLB.com](http://MLB.com), [USABaseball.com](http://USABaseball.com), [USASoftball.com](http://USASoftball.com) and other partner websites.

For the second consecutive year, baseball and softball combined to rank as the most participated team sports in the United States in 2017 (25.1 million participants), according to the annual Topline Participation Report produced by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA). In 2017, casual participation in baseball rose by 12.9% with overall participation seeing a 6.0% increase, the latter of which is the largest increase of all major team sports. Over the last three years, baseball has seen a 49.1% growth in casual participation, which is in direct correlation to the launch of the PLAY BALL initiative.



Elizabeth, NJ Mayor Bollwage Invites Community to Play Ball at Hanratty Field on Thursday, August 16, 2018 from 2-4 PM

Mayor Bollwage's Play Ball Summer 2018 Celebration & Mayor's Trophy Game

### MAYOR BOLLWAGE TO HOST PLAY BALL SUMMER 2018 ON AUGUST 16 AT HANRATTY FIELD 2:00 - 4:00 PM

The end of summer is approaching, but there's still time to enjoy one of everyone's favorite summertime activities -- baseball. On Thursday, August 16, Elizabeth's Mayor Bollwage will host the annual Play Ball Summer celebration at Hanratty Field, 914 E. Westfield Avenue. The fun begins with Skills & Drills from 2-4 PM, followed by the Mayor's Trophy Game at 5:30 PM.

All are welcome to come out and celebrate summer, practice their batting, catching and pitching skills, and cheer on local players and baseball legends, including Al Hawkins, former MLB player and current coach at Montclair State, and high school baseball standout, Anthony Colletti, Jr.

Mayor Bollwage has hosted Play Ball Summer events for the past four years. He is one of more than 300 mayors across the country to participate in PLAY BALL, a joint program sponsored by Major League Baseball (MLB) and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Over the last three years, baseball has seen a 49.1% growth in casual participation, which is in direct correlation to the launch of the PLAY BALL initiative.













PLAY BALL

THIS IS A PLAY BALL CITY





**[usmayors.org/playball](https://usmayors.org/playball)**

**For more information about the 2019 Play Ball Program please contact**

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#### MLB SUPPORT OF LOCAL PLAY BALL EVENTS

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#### MAYORAL INVOLVEMENT IN PLAY BALL EVENTS

##### **Doug Palmer**

Former Mayor of Trenton, Past USCM President, Adviser on Play Ball

#### PLAY BALL SIGN UP, ORGANIZING LOCAL EVENTS AND PROMOTION

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**Please Visit [usmayors.org/playball](http://usmayors.org/playball)**



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