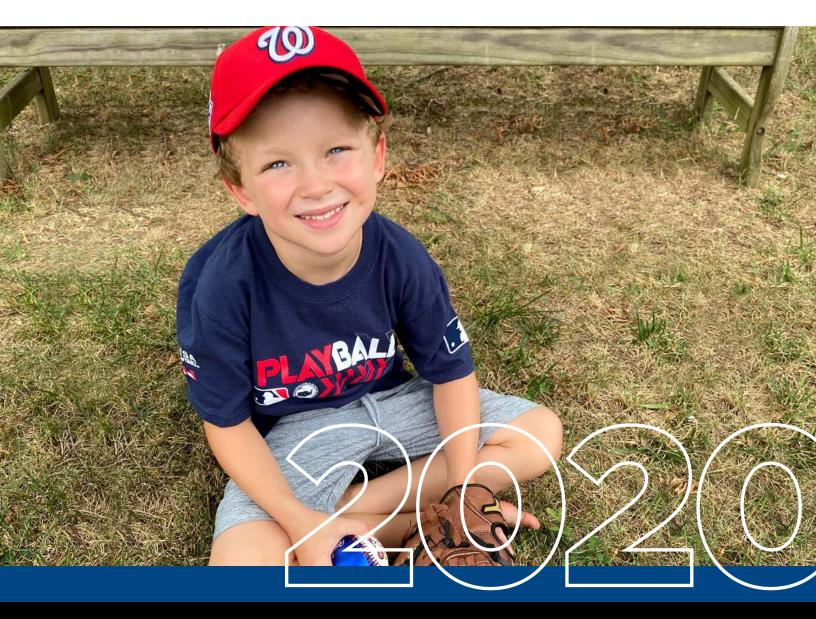
# MAYORS FILAYBALL

A Partnership Between Major League Baseball and The United States Conference of Mayors





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#### **Tom Cochran**

CEO and Executive Director

The United States Conference of Mayors is the official non-partisan organization of cities with each city represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor.

## 2020 MAYORS PLAY BALL

The 2020 Mayors PLAY BALL year launched during the 88<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) with remarks from Major League Baseball (MLB) Chief Baseball Development Officer Tony Reagins who this year was accompanied by members of the 2020 USA Softball Olympic Team. Catcher Aubree Munro addressed the plenary luncheon as mayors gave the team a standing ovation and rousing send off as everyone eagerly looked forward to supporting the women during the upcoming 2020 Olympic Games. The 2020 PLAY BALL Booth featured the 2019 World Series Championship Commissioner's Trophy and the Washington Nationals mascot Screech.

In early March, USCM President Bryan K. Barnett joined Mesa Mayor John Giles and Tempe Mayor Mark Mitchell, for a special PLAY BALL event in Mesa during a Texas Rangers vs. Chicago Cubs Spring Training game. Prior to the game the mayors participated in one of the only 2020 Mayors PLAY BALL events before covid-19 restrictions impacted our nation's ability to gather for youth sports.

On what would have been Opening Day weekend, when thousands of fans would have been packing the stands and millions more watching baseball on television, USCM in partnership with MLB, released a short film, *The City Behind Us: The Story of the Elmora Troopers*. The film highlights the Elmora Troopers' journey to the 2019 Little League World Series – a goal never before achieved in the city of Elizabeth, New Jersey. Many of the Elmora Troopers players first participated in USCM's PLAY BALL program.

The City Behind Us gave fans across the country the chance to watch a story that shows how the little league team caught the attention and love of their city, and eventually the whole nation. During the team's championship run, Major League

players such as Anthony Rizzo of the Chicago Cubs adopted the "Jersey Shake" as a post-home run celebration in recognition of the team and ESPN began airing their games during peak ratings hours.

The short film is currently screening in film festivals and has been featured viewing on MLB.com. Some of the 2020 Film festival's *The City Behind Us* has appeared and placed are:

- Montreal Independent Film Festival
- Woods Hole Film Festival
- Jersey Shore Film Festival (awarded best documentary short film)
- Monmouth Film Festival (awarded best New Jersey film)
- The Short Films Awards (awarded best documentary short film, nominated for best directing & best editing)
- Venice (CA) Shorts
- Dumbo (Brooklyn) Film Festival
- Seattle Film Festival (Official nominee)

The pandemic has been a turbulent time for cities and youth baseball and softball. When schools closed and parks and recreation programs were limited by stay at home orders, The United States Conference of Mayors PLAY BALL Program pivoted to becoming virtual with the Mayors PLAY BALL Facebook page and PLAY BALL At Home. Throughout the spring and summer mayors turned to social media to share drills for young people and their families to play inside as well as safely outdoors.

Mayors sent a strong message to the young people in their cities on the importance of honoring Negro League baseball legends when the mayors tipped their caps for the Negro Baseball League's 100th Anniversary on August 16, 2020. As part of the centennial celebration, mayors shared videos of their cities' historic connections to Negro League players and teams. Additionally, photos of America's mayors, in collaboration with the African American Mayors Association, tipping their caps was featured on a special mayors section on The Negro League Baseball Museum website.

For the first time MLB post-season had to be held in neutral locations which provided a unique opportunity for San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner and Arlington, TX Mayor Jeff Williams. The Mayors joined Baseball Commissioner Robert D. Manfred, Jr. on a special program to discuss the 2020 Postseason and the neutral locations. MLB and the mayors felt it was important that baseball fans around the world heard how it would work, how each city would be supporting the postseason, and, more importantly, what they believed it meant for baseball fans in these cities and throughout the nation.

Next year, when appropriate safety protocols are set and we resume gathering, PLAY BALL mayors will help lead the charge in bringing back baseball and softball to cities throughout the country with 2021 Sandlot Mayoral PLAY BALL events.



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



Major League Baseball (MLB) Chief Baseball Development Officer Tony Reagins addresses the nation's mayors during the 88th Winter Meeting.



2020 USA Softball Olympic Team Players help launch the 2020 PLAY BALL Program.



2020 USA Softball Olympic Team Catcher Aubree Munro spoke to the mayors during the luncheon on behalf of the team players.













USCM PLAY BALL Youth Ambassador enjoyed taking a photos mayors and the 2019 World Series Championship Commissioner's Trophy. Mayors had an opportunity pose with team, trophy and Screech at the PLAY BALL Booth.















## SPRING TRAINING



USCM President Rochester Hills, MI Mayor Bryan Barnett and Mesa Mayor John Giles pose with some of the Mesa Mayor's PLAY BALL pregame-event.



Mayors pose with Clark Mascot during the Texas Rangers vs. Chicago Cubs Spring Training game. For the past two years, the Mayor's PLAY BALL Program has encouraged MLB Spring Training cities to host mayoral events in March to bolster youth impact locally. Due to covid-19 baseball was halted and this was one of the only official PLAY BALL events held in 2020.



Mesa Mayor's PLAY BALL Spring Training

## **ELMORE TROOPERS MOVIE**















































For Immediate Release Saturday, March 28, 2020

Contact:

Sara Durr, sdurr@usmayors.org, (202) 215-1811

#### New Baseball Short Film Chronicles Elmora Troopers' Journey to 2019 Little League World Series

The Elmora Troopers, a little league team from Elizabeth, New Jersey, overcame the odds to captivate their city and the nation

(Elizabeth, New Jersey) – On what would have been Opening Day weekend, when thousands of fans would have been packing the stands and millions more watching baseball on television, the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) in partnership with Major League Baseball, is releasing a short film, The City Behind Us: The Story of the Elmora Troopers. The film highlights the Elmora Troopers' journey to the 2019 Little League World Series – a goal never before achieved in the city of Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Many of the Elmora Troopers players first participated in USCM's PLAY BALL program, a joint initiative launched in 2015 with Major League Baseball, which encourages mayors to engage with citizens, families and their respective city departments to organize individual and community "Play Ball" events. More than 350 mayors participated in the program in 2019.

Just yesterday in a letter to fans, MLB Commissioner Robert Manfred said, "While we aren't on the field today, there will still be plenty of baseball for you to watch." The City Behind Us will give fans across the country the chance to watch a story that shows how the little league team caught the attention and love of their city, and eventually the whole nation. During the team's championship run, Major League players such as Anthony Rizzo of the Chicago Cubs adopted the "Jersey Shake" as a post-home run celebration in recognition of the team and ESPN began airing their games during peak ratings hours.

The documentary can be viewed here: [LINK]

"I couldn't be any prouder of our team, our coaches, the parents or the entire Elizabethtown community," said Elizabeth, New Jersey Mayor J. Christian Bollwage. "The Elmora Troopers showed us what baseball is all about, and it's more than just what takes place on the field. I look

forward to being able to watch their continued success, and for the Mayors PLAY BALL Program to continue to grow and inspire young people to take part in America's pastime."

Mayor Bollwage has been one of the biggest supporters of PLAY BALL events since the program's inception. Many of the Elmora Troopers players participated in Mayor Bollwage's first PLAY BALL event.

"This short film reminds us that baseball still has the unique ability to bring us all together, even during a time when we must be physically apart," said Tom Cochran, USCM CEO and Executive Director. "The Elmora Troopers 2019 season serves as a light in the darkness during these tough times, and I'm proud that the Mayors PLAY BALL initiative was able to play such an important role in fostering a love of baseball among youth in Elizabeth, New Jersey and across the country. We hope this film will inspire other youth to play baseball and to have a community rally around them as the city of Elizabeth did."

In 2019, the Mayors PLAY BALL initiative engaged over 37,303 youth in USCM reported events held across the United States. To learn more about the Conference's PLAY BALL initiative, click here.

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About the United States Conference of Mayors — The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are nearly 1,400 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/usmayors, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.

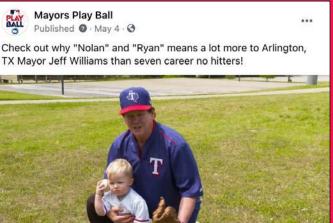
## PLAY BALL AT HOME



A message from The United States Conference of Mayors President Rochester Hills, MI Mayor Bryan K. Barnett encouraging mayors and kids to stay active and PLAY BALL while we wait for baseball to return!











Happy Jackie Robinson Day!

"Jackie Robinson is not an abstraction in Pasadena, he is still a presence in this town and his family is still here. We have a lot of Robinsons in Pasadena and they are a valuable part of the community. Jackie's legacy really lives on. We've made sure that kids growing up here know who Jackie was and what he contributed to the nation,"said Pasadena Mayor Terry Tornek as he reflected Jackie Robinson's legacy and how he saw Robinson play at Ebbets





### Mayors Play Ball

Watch Elizabeth, NJ's Elmora Troopers "selfie video" about staying safe and staying sharp.

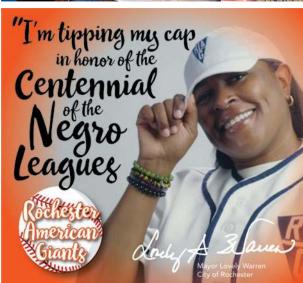








## TIPPING YOUR CAP





















#### Elizabeth, NJ Mayor J. Christian Bollwage

Remembering the heritage and tradition of Negro Leagues Baseball is something all of us in Elizabeth are proud to support. Last month, we recognized three great players, two of which got their start in Elizabeth: Bo Wallace, Don Newcombe and Robert Scott, who settled in Elizabeth. It is their legacy, as well as other players from Elizabeth, that encourages our youth to play America's favorite pastime - specifically, our Elmora Troopers team, who advanced all the way to the Little League World Series last summer," said Mayor J. Christian Bollwage. "Each August, we participate in the Play Ball initiative, however due to the pandemic, we cannot gather to play this year, but I still tip my hat to all of baseball players, past and present throughout our nation. Whether you are tossing a ball around at home or playing in one of our City's or Country's many great leagues, the sport of baseball has a positive effect on our community; it continues to be a great way to connect and promote a healthy and active lifestyle."

#### **Huntington Beach, CA Mayor Lyn Semeta**

In Huntington Beach, California, we have produced great players, and one of our Little League teams even won the World Series in 2011. But we're especially proud to know that in 1950, Jackie Robinson, my fellow UCLA alum and Kansas City Monarch, came to Orange County to portray himself in the film "The Jackie Robinson story". We know that Mr. Robinson's legacy has and will continue to inspire young ball players in our region for generations to come.

#### Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti

"The Negro Leagues counted among its ranks so many American greats, inluding my Dodgers' very own Roy Campanella and Jackie Robinson — heroes who razed the color barrier and showed us what's possible when opportunity is extended to everyone," said Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti. "L.A. is a city of dreamers and doers — and in this moment of reimagining, that legacy of service and sacrifice moves us to dream bigger, swing harder, and run faster toward a more equitable world."

#### **Nashville Mayor John Cooper**

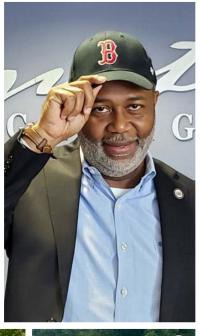
"Tom Wilson, a Nashvillian, was a pioneer for securing baseball for the Black population in our city. He started The Nashville Elite Giants in 1921 which played in both the Southern and National Negro Leagues. The team had six successful seasons. Roy Campanella, Leon Day, and Junior Gilliam wore the team jersey at one point during their legendary careers. I have great respect and gratitude for what the League and its players have done for the sport of baseball and providing a significant economic and cultural influence on the entire nation. Nashville and the country should be proud."







































































#### New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio

"I tip my cap to the Brooklyn Royal Giants, and to the Negro League teams and players across the country who not only changed America's game, but changed America for the better," said Mayor de Blasio. "This is not just about our love of the sport of baseball. This is about justice, learning from our shared past and being inspired by those who overcame incredible struggles."

#### Mayor McKinley Price, DDS, Newport News, VA

Newport News is rich in its history of the Negro League. James "Poo" Johnson, a lifelong native of the city remembers when he was young, baseball was the dominant sport played, & vividly remembers when the Negro League often played in Newport News & many of its well known players. Willie Mays lived with him after being drafted in the Army while stationed at Fort Eustis in the early 1950's, calling himself an "honorary Newport Newsian." Joe Durham, a native of Newport News, & a graduate of my high school alma mater, played for the Negro League & later was a coach. The City of Newport News is proud to have been one of the stops for the Negro League & we send our congratulations on their Centennial.

#### Toledo Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz said

"While we recognize the important role the Negro Leagues played in strengthening the sport of baseball and advancing the cause of civil rights, this year's 100th anniversary is also a bittersweet reminder of our country's long and troubled history of racial inequality.

Our city is proud that the first African American to ever play Major League Baseball did so in Toledo — when Moses Fleetwood Walker took the field for the Toledo Bluestockings in 1884, he broke the major league color barrier 63 years before Jackie Robinson. But we also understand that many thousands of other players never got their shot at the big leagues simply because of the color of their skin.

The Negro Leagues helped highlight the talents of such pioneers as Josh Gibson, Cool Papa Bell and Satchel Paige, and in so doing, paved the way for greater equality — both on the diamond and in society as a whole."

#### **Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms**

"Atlanta holds great weight in the history of American sports, including serving as home to the National Negro League's Atlanta Black Crackers and to baseball legends such as Hank Aaron," said Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms. "Congratulations on celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the National Negro League and thank you for building a path that can make dreams into reality."



























### **NEUTRAL CITIES**





MEDIA ADVISORY

October 5, 2020

#### MAYORS OF NEUTRAL SITE CITIES AND **COMMISSONER MANFRED USHER IN 2020 MLB** POSTSEASON IN SPECIAL VIDEO GREETING TO FANS

Beginning Today, San Diego, Los Angeles, Houston and Arlington Will Be Locations of First Neutral Site MLB Postseason Games in Baseball History

Baseball Commissioner Robert D. Manfred, Jr. Hon. Kevin L. Faulconer – Mayor, San Diego (Calif.) WHO:

Hon. Eric Garcetti – Mayor, Los Angeles (Calif.) Hon. Sylvester Turner – Mayor, Houston (Texas) Hon. Jeff Williams - Mayor, Arlington (Texas)

WHAT: In association with their long-standing partnership, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and Major League Baseball are sharing a video to commemorate the first-ever neutral site MLB Postseason in baseball history. Commissioner Manfred and the Mayors of each respective host ballpark's city recorded the video as a special message to fans about the 2020 MLB Postseason.

VIDEO: https://www.mlb.com/video/postseason-gets-warm-welcome?t=most-popular

ABOUT MLB & U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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ABOUT THE 2020 MLB POSTSEASON

Reginning with the Division Series, Clubs have shifted to neutral site locations for the duration of the 2020 Postseason due to health, safety and competitive considerations. American League games from the Division Series forward will be held in Los Angeles and San Diego, and Astonai League games from the Division Series forward will be held in the Sangeles and San Diego, and Astonai League games from the Division Series forward will be pelayed in Artington and Houston. In the first neutral site Fail Classic in most instory, Came One of the 2020 World Series on FOX is set for Tuesday, October 20° at the new home of the Texas Rangers, Globe Life Field in Artington, Texas. A potential Game Seven of the World Series is scheduled for Wednesday, October 20°.

San Diego's Petco Park will host the American League Division Series, which are presented by Utz, that features the matchup with the winners of the 12° and 45° Wild Card Series.

Dodger Stadium will feature the ALDS with the winners of the 2/7 and 3/6 Wild Card Series.

Both best-of-five ALDS will be scheduled for Monday, October 5° through Friday, October 9°.

Arlington's Globe Life Field will host the National League Division Series, which are presented by Doosan, that includes the winners of the 1/8 and 4/5 Wild Card Series.

Both best-of-five ALDS will be scheduled for Tuesday, October 5° through Fasturday, October 10° through as late as Sattrady, October 10° the ALCs will be exclusively Vedecas by 176.S.

All games telecast on FOX, 155 and HLB Network will be waitable to HLB.TV adsortinces who are authorized as subscribers to the applicable network through a participating by 7° through Frederic Provider. SFM Radio waitable to HLB.TV adsortinces who are authorized as subscribers to the applicable network through a participating by 7° through. SFM Radio waitable to HLB.TV adsortinces who are authorized as s

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Contact: Steve Arocho, Major League Baseball, (718) 614-3487, steven.arocho@mlb.com







## **2019 PLAY BALL CITIES**

Addison, IL Aguadilla, PR Akron, OH Alameda, CA Albany, NY Albuquerque, NM Alexandria, VA Alexandria, LA Alhambra, CA Aliquippa, PA Aliso Viejo, CA Allentown, PA Anaheim, CA Anchorage, AK Apopka, FL Arecibo, PR Arlington, TX Atlanta, GA Attleboro, MA Auburn, WA Augusta, GA Austin, TX Baltimore, MD Bangor, ME Barceloneta, PR Baton Rouge, LA Beaumont, TX Beaverton, OR Belleville, MI Benton Harbor, MI Beverly Hills, CA Binghamton, NY Birmingham, AL Bloomington, IN Bonita Springs, FL Boston, MA Bound Brook, NJ Branson, MO Bridgeport, CT Brockton, MA

Broken Arrow, OK

Brooklyn Center, MN Brownsville, TX Buffalo, NY Burbank, CA Burlington, VT Burnsville, MN Burton, MI Cabo Rojo, PR Calabasas, CA Camden, NJ Canóvanas, PR Carmel, IN Carrboro, NC Carson, CA Cayce, SC Cayey, PR Central Falls, RI Cerritos, CA Champaign, IL Charleston, WV Charleston, SC Charlotte, NC Chattanooga, TN Chevenne, WY Chicago, IL Cidra, PR Cincinnati, OH Clarksville, TN Cleveland, OH College Station, TX Colorado Springs, CO Columbia, SC Columbus, OH Compton, CA Cooper City, FL Coral Springs, FL Culver City, CA Dallas, TX Davenport, IA Davie, FL

Dayton, OH

Denver, CO Des Moines, IA Detroit, MI Dolton, IL Doral, FL Douglasville, GA Downey, CA Dubuque, IA Durham, NC Eagle Pass, TX East Orange, NJ East Palo Alto, CA Eden Prairie, MN Edina, MN Elizabeth, NJ Elk Grove, CA Erie, PA Eugene, OR Everett, MA Ewing Township, NJ Fairbanks, AK Fairbanks North Star Borough, AK Fanwood, NJ Fargo, ND Farmingham, MA Fayetteville, NC Fillmore, IL Findlay, OH Flint, MI Florida, PR Fontana, CA Fort Myers, FL Fort Wayne, IN Fort Worth, TX Frankfort, KY Frederick, MD Fremont, CA Frisco, TX Garland, TX

Gary, IN

Glendale, AZ Glendale Heights, IL Grand Forks, ND Green Bay, WI Greenville, NC Gresham, OR Gulfport, MS Hagerstown, MD Hallandale Beach, FL Hamilton Township, NJ Hammond, IN Hanover Park, IL Hartford, CT Hattiesburg, MS Helena, MT Hempstead, NY Hendersonville, TN Hialeah, FL Hialeah Gardens, FL Hillsboro, OR Hoffman Estates, IL Holland, MI Honolulu, HI Hope, NJ Hopkinsville, KY Hormigueros, PR Houston, TX Humacao, PR Huntington, WV Independence, MO Indianapolis, IN Irvine, CA Irving, TX Ithaca, NY Jersey City, NJ Johns Creek, GA Kalamazoo, MI Kansas City, KS Kansas City, MO

Continued >

Kearney, NE Naguabo, PR Providence, RI Tacoma, WA Kearny, NJ Naranjito, PR Quincy, IL Tallahassee, FL Killeen, TX Nashville, TN Racine, WI Tamarac, FL Kinston, NC New Albany, IN Rahway, NJ Tampa, FL Knoxville, TN New Bedford, MA Rancho Cordova, CA Tempe, AZ Lajas, PR New Brunswick, NJ Rapid City, SD Texas City, TX Lakewood, OH New Orleans, LA Redford, MI Thornton, CO Lansing, MI New York, NY Reno, NV Tigard, OR Largo, FL Newark, NJ Rialto, CA Toa Baja, PR Las Cruces, NM Newport Beach, CA Richmond, CA Toledo, OH Las Vegas, NV Newport News, VA Richmond, VA Topeka, KS Lauderdale Lakes, FL Newton, MA Riverbank, CA Torrance, CA Lauderhill, FL Niagara Falls, NY Rochester, NY Trenton, NJ Laurel, MD Norfolk, VA Rochester, MN Trotwood, OH Lawrence, MA Normal, IL Rochester Hills, MI Tucson, AZ Lexington, KY North Charleston, SC Rocklin, CA Turlock, CA Lima, OH North Miami, FL Roseville, CA Tuscaloosa, AL Lisle, IL North Miami Beach, FL Sacramento, CA Union Township, NJ North Wilkesboro, NC Little Rock, AR Salisbury, NC Vallejo, CA Livermore, CA Norwalk, CT Salt Lake City, UT Virginia Gardens, FL Oakland, CA Lomita, CA San Antonio, TX Walnut Creek, CA Long Beach, CA Ocala, FL San Bernardino, CA Warren, MI Los Angeles, CA Oklahoma City, OK San Diego, CA Warren, OH Orland Park, IL San Leandro, CA Washington, DC Louisville, KY Lynn, MA Orlando, FL Santa Ana, CA Waterloo, IA Orocovis, PR Santa Barbara, CA West Covina, CA Macon, GA Madison, WI Palm Bay, FL Santa Fe, NM West Haven, CT Manchester, NH Park Forest, IL Santa Monica, CA West Hollywood, CA Manhattan Beach, CA West Palm Beach, FL Parkland, FL Scappoose, OR Maui, HI Pembroke Pines, FL Schaumburg, IL West Springfield, MA McKinney, TX Pensacola, FL Schenectady, NY Westlake, OH Memphis, TN Perris, CA Seattle, WA Westland, MI Merced, CA Philadelphia, PA Socorro, TX Weymouth, MA Meridian, MS Pinellas Park, FL South Bend, IN Wichita, KS Mesa, AZ Piscataway, NJ South Gate, CA Wilmington, DE Pittsburgh, PA Miami, FL Springfield, IL Winston-Salem, NC Miami Beach, FL Plainfield, NJ Wisconsin Rapids, WI St. Louis, MO Miami Gardens, FL Plano, TX St. Paul, MN Wolcott, CT Milford, CT Pleasantville, NJ St. Petersburg, FL Woodbury, MN Milwaukee, WI Ponce, PR Stockton, CA Woodland, CA Minneapolis, MN Pontiac, MI Stonecrest, GA Woodmere, OH Port Arthur, TX Mobile, AL Sumter, SC Yonkers, NY York, PA Moreno Valley, CA Port St. Lucie, FL Sunrise, FL

Syracuse, NY

Yuba City, CA

Mount Vernon, NY

Portland, OR

## usmayors.org/play-ball

For more information about the 2021 Play Ball Program please contact

#### **Jocelyn Bogen**

jbogen@usmayors.org 202-861-6727

#### **Jared Aronowitz**

jaronowitz@usmayors.org

#### MLB SUPPORT OF LOCAL PLAY BALL EVENTS

Major League Baseball 1271 Avenue of the Americas New York, NY 10020

#### **Tony Reagins**

Chief Baseball Development Officer 212-931-7632 tony.reagins@mlb.com

#### **PRESS INQUIRES - PLAY BALL**

#### **Steve Arocho**

Senior Director, Business Communications 212-931-7581 steve.arocho@mlb.com

#### **MAYORAL INVOLVEMENT IN PLAY BALL EVENTS**

#### **Doug Palmer**

Former Mayor of Trenton Past USCM President, Adviser on Play Ball dpalmer19@gmail.com

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

#### **Tom McClimon**

Managing Director The United States Conference of Mayors 202-861-6729 mcclimon@usmayors.org

#### Jocelyn Bogen

**Program Director** The United States Conference of Mayors 202-861-6727 jbogen@usmayors.org

#### **Jared Aronowitz**

jaronowitz@usmayors.org

#### **Please Visit** usmayors.org/play-ball



THE UNITED STATES **CONFERENCE OF MAYORS** 



Tom Cochran, CEO and Executive Director

1620 Eye Street, NW Washington, DC 20006 Tel: 202.293.7330

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