



108th Congress

Congressional Black Caucus of the United States Congress

1632 Longworth HOB • Washington, DC 20515 • (202) 226-9776 • fax (202) 225-3178
www.congressionalblackcaucus.net

August 20, 2004

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Mr. William Forester, Jr.
Metropolitan Junior Baseball League
10405 Brickerton Drive
Mechanicsville, VA 23116

Dear Mr. Forester:

On behalf of the Members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), I would like to commend you on your efforts to improve baseball programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The Metropolitan Junior Baseball League's proposal to partner with Major League Baseball is critical to providing the financial assistance our HBCUs need to make their baseball programs better.

The proposal is also valuable because it requires that participating HBCUs develop a community outreach program in which HBCU students provide tutoring, mentoring and baseball coaching for socially and economically disadvantaged youth in the area. This effort will not only improve the quality of HBCU baseball programs, it will also improve community opportunities for youth. I am very supportive of this initiative and to follow-up, Congressman Bobby Scott's office will be working with you on this effort.

Sincerely,

Elijah E. Cummings
Chair

cc: U.S. Representative Bobby Scott

HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (HBCU) BASEBALL PROPOSAL

BACKGROUND

Jackie Robinson integrated Major League Baseball (MLB) 57 years ago. Traditionally baseball had been an integral part of the African American community. The Negro Leagues had some of the best baseball talent ever to play the game. However, today African Americans are passing up baseball for basketball, football and various detrimental pursuits. In 1975 African American players made up 27 percent of MLB ballplayers. Today they only make up less than 10 percent of MLB ballplayers. MLB's Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI) program is trying to redirect this trend. However, there must be a fertile training ground for players to compete after they finish the RBI program. Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) baseball programs will serve this purpose. The emergence of Rickie Weeks, the No. 2 draft choice last year out of Southern University, exemplifies this point.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- (1) To rekindle the interest of African Americans in the game of baseball.
- (2) To have HBCU baseball programs complement MLB's RBI program.
- (3) To increase the number of African Americans who will participate in the game of baseball at all levels.
- (4) To have HBCU baseball coaches and players replace the absentee father to teach and coach the game of baseball to youth in our economically and socially disadvantaged communities.
- (5) To increase the African American fan base and their attendance at MLB games.
- (6) To create a liaison between MLB and HBCU baseball programs.
- (7) To have MLB partner with Americorps, targeting HBCU students to provide services that will keep African American youth in the game.

OVERVIEW

There are 105 HBCU's and approximately 52 of them currently field baseball teams. HBCU baseball programs will serve as the focal point of the reemergence of African American baseball players and fans. HBCU baseball coaches and players will provide instruction on the proper fundamentals of the game of baseball to youth in their area. Baseball becomes easier and fun to kids who learn the proper fundamentals at an early age and they usually continue to play as teenagers. According to Atlanta Braves scout Robert Lucas, 85% of HBCU baseball players are African American. Outside of HBCU baseball programs, African Americans make up less than 5% of all collegiate baseball players. HBCU baseball programs will afford RBI baseball players an opportunity to continue to play collegiate baseball. This will enable a significant number of youth the opportunity to obtain a college degree and to continue to pursue their dreams of playing in the Major Leagues. Many MLB clubs are reducing scouting staffs and focusing on college players in the amateur draft. A recent article in the Los Angeles Times quoted RBI founder and veteran MLB scout John Young saying; "We can provide bats, balls and

facilities. But if a black athlete isn't going on to college, and the number of blacks playing college ball isn't high, then there's a real possibility he won't be scouted at all the way clubs are laying off scouts every day." This problem is magnified by the fact that about one-third of African American men in their 20s are in jail or prison or on parole or probation, according to The Sentencing Project, a nonprofit group that advocates alternative sentences. The same study found more young African Americans in the criminal justice system than in college.

African Americans who attain college degrees have positioned themselves as worthy candidates to become gainfully employed in our society. Through HBCU baseball programs, youth will strive to play in the Major League. However, if they fall short, they will be prepared to become gainfully employed in their field of study, and will have the discretionary spending money for themselves and their families to patronize the Major League team in their area. This is significant based on a survey for the year 2002, which revealed African Americans' buying power at \$631 billion. They spent over \$386 million on sports and recreational equipment. However, statistics show that MLB's African American fan base is on a decline and only the NHL shows a bigger decline among the six major sports. Finally, MLB must cultivate this process by providing training opportunities for HBCU coaches and aggressively scouting HBCU baseball players.

HOW IT IS GOING TO WORK

We are requesting a 5-year initiative from Major League Baseball to support HBCU baseball programs. We are asking MLB to give \$2,000,000 to the Metropolitan Junior Baseball League Inc. (MJBL) per year for the next five years to be dispersed among the 105 HBCUs. MJBL is a 38-year-old non-profit organization that advocates African Americans having the opportunity to play the game of baseball. MJBL is a member of MLB's RBI program and the brainchild of the HBCU baseball symposium. This funding process will allow MLB to provide financial assistance to HBCU programs without running afoul of NCAA and NAIA regulations. This money will be dispersed at the annual Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium for the Survival of HBCU Baseball Programs. Additional monies will be raised during this five-year period by MJBL so that the HBCU baseball programs will be able to continue to receive financial support after the initial five-year period. Each HBCU will be invited to submit a proposal requesting funding on an annual basis. This money can be used to start a new baseball program or to upgrade an existing program. All proposals will be sent to MJBL for review. MJBL's executive director William Forrester Jr., will make site visits to the selected HBCUs that have submitted proposals for possible funding. He will make a recommendation back to MLB on which proposals he deems worthy of funding. Additionally, he will send out each HBCU's baseball schedule and the names of the top players to scouts from every MLB team.

The criteria for funding will include HBCU's programs working with the local youth to teach them the game of baseball. MLB partnership with Americorps will provide the manpower to steer economically and socially disadvantaged African American young in a positive direction. HBCU students serving as AmeriCorps volunteers will provide tutoring and mentoring for these youth throughout the school year. They will also serve

as baseball coaches and umpires during the baseball season. The ultimate goal is to shape these youth into productive citizens. HBCU's must work with the local RBI program, Boys and Girls Clubs, housing authority, public schools or other youth organizations to help teach the game of baseball. A plan must be implemented which will allow local youth to attend home baseball games at no charge. Clinics and mentoring opportunities must be provided for the local area youth. MLB will provide coaches training for the head baseball coach at each HBCU. This training will be mandatory for coaches if they are requesting funding from the foundation. This training will take place during spring training and last 5 days. Each coach will be assigned to one ball club to learn how MLB coaches conduct their practices. This is imperative, because the development of the HBCU baseball players is dependent upon the tutelage from their coach.

Grant monies may be used as scholarships to bring in additional ballplayers, to hire additional coaches, to upgrade baseball diamonds, to purchase additional equipment or other avenues to improve their baseball programs. At the end of each year each HBCU program which has received funding will be required to submit a copy of all receipts to justify all equipment and services purchased through this funding. Additionally, they will be required to send a written report of the progress that was made from their use of these funds.

CONCLUSION

This infusion of monies into HBCU baseball programs will enable these programs to make significant strides into becoming competitive and aid in the development of quality baseball players in their respective NCAA or NAIA conferences. It will also help rekindle the interest among young African Americans in the game of baseball. As a result of this 5-year initiative there should be a 10 percent increase in youth, ages 5 to 12, playing baseball in states where HBCU's are located. There will be a 15 percent increase in African Americans playing collegiate baseball. There will be a 5 percent increase of African American baseball players to sign with a MLB organization. There will be a 5 percent increase in the African American fan base and a 7 percent increase in money spent on MLB and their products by African Americans. These figures may vary based on the amount of marketing MLB does in the African American community.

2005 HBCU Budget

Travel	\$	30,000.00
Bobby Bonds HBCU Symposium		20,000.00
Grant money to HBCU Baseball Programs		1,700,000.00
Executive Director		90,000.00
Administrative Assistant		60,000.00
Fax/Telephone/Pager		5,000.00
Office Supplies		5,000.00
Rent		15,000.00
Legal/Accounting/Tax Preparation		55,000.00
Committee Expenses		5,000.00
Transportation		3,500.00
Insurance		1,500.00
Postage		1,000.00
Administrative		4,000.00
Web Site Design		<u>5,000.00</u>
Total	\$	2,000,000.00



Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium
on the Survival of
Historical Black Colleges and Universities Baseball Programs



September 17, 2004

Committee Members:

Steve Baker

*President and CEO, NAIA
Olathe, Kansas*

Patricia Bonds

San Francisco, California

Frank Evans

*Former Negro League Baseball Player
Montgomery, Alabama*

Jim Mud Cat Grant

*Former Major League Baseball Player
Los Angeles, California*

Willie Mays

*Member of Major League Baseball
Hall of Fame
San Francisco, California*

Dave Stewart

*Former Major League Baseball Player
San Diego, California*

Bobby Taylor

*Former Major League Baseball Player
Springfield, Massachusetts*

Jimmy Williams

*Former Howard University Baseball Coach
Washington, D.C.*

John Young

*Founder, RBI
Irvine, California*

Jock Banks

*General Council
Washington, D.C.*

William Forrester, Jr.

Executive Director

Mr. Jimmie Lee Solomon
Senior VP, Baseball Operations
Major League Baseball
245 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Mr. Solomon:

This letter is written to memorialize our telephone conversation on Thursday, September 9, 2004, in which you informed me of the decision not to fund the Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium Committee's proposal to restore the game of baseball to HBCU's. The rejection from Major League Baseball is a serious blow to an initiative that has a ground swell of support in the African American community. Out of love for the game of baseball, the Committee has determined not to treat the setback as fatal, and has decided to continue to seek additional national support for the initiative. We hope that in the future this effort to preserve a time honored tradition by revitalizing a population segment's participation in America's pastime will be favorably received.

Sincerely,

William Forrester, Jr.

Aug 27, 2003

Group wants to spark college baseball interests

MICHAEL PAUL WILLIAMS
TIMES-DISPATCH COLUMNIST



Contact Michael Paul Williams
at (804) 649-6815 or
mwilliams@timesdispatch.com

Baseball has always been more than a game for us.

The national pastime has been a measuring stick for black progress, from the Negro Leagues to Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier, to Hank Aaron and Barry Bonds overcoming death threats to smash home-run records.

The game has always been such an integral and assumed part of our lives that it has been startling to witness its decline in the black community.

In recent years, we have seen high school baseball teams in the city of Richmond struggle not merely to compete, but to field teams at all. And on the major league level, only about 10 percent of the players are African-American - down from 27 percent in 1975, according to an article in Sports Illustrated.

William Forrester is well aware of this problem. He heads the Metropolitan Junior Baseball League, which provides baseball for inner city youths.

"Baseball gets them off the streets and gives them something constructive to do," Forrester says. "They need that alternative during the summer months when they're out of school and really don't have anything structured to do."

The tactical nature of the game is also a benefit, Forrester maintains. "Baseball is more of a thinking man's game, where you have various alternatives. . . . That's what our young men need to do is think, and learn they have alternatives to what's out in their neighborhoods."

Earlier this month, Forrester organized a MJBL symposium at Virginia Union University to look at ways to help the baseball programs at historically black colleges and universities.

Upgrading those programs will create interest in baseball among inner city kids and give his players someplace to go when their league days are over, he says. He was also concerned about the demise of the baseball program at Howard University, where three of his MJBL players were on the team.

I moderated the panel, whose members included Jimmie Lee Solomon, senior vice president of baseball operations for Major League Baseball; Hall of Famer Frank Evans of the former Negro Leagues; and Southern University coach Roger Cador.

Historically black colleges in the past produced such baseball stars as Lou Brock, Tommie Agee and Cleon Jones. More recently, Rickie Weeks of Cador's Southern University squad was named the 2003 college player of the year and was the No. 2 pick overall in the baseball draft.

But overall, there has been a drop-off in both talent and participation. The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association, which includes Virginia State University, Virginia Union University and St. Paul's College, only fields five teams in baseball.

The seed for the idea of a symposium was planted during a conversation between Forrester and retired baseball star Bobby Bonds, the father of Barry Bonds.

Bobby Bonds had been slated to participate in MJBL's golf tournament last summer but could not attend because he was diagnosed with cancer. He later invited Forrester to meet him at a golf tournament in North Carolina, where they discussed the participation issue.

Forrester argued that black kids weren't playing baseball "not because they don't want to, but in our case, it's a lack of support and resources. I told him it would take former major leaguers with enough clout to step up and make it happen. We talked about having a roundtable discussion."

Bobby Bonds donated an autographed baseball and autographed photograph of his son hitting his 600th home run, to be auctioned off by MJBL.

He also pledged to attend Forrester's symposium but fell ill and could not attend. Bonds died last week of cancer at 57.

During the symposium, panelists discussed various ideas, such as exploring a way that Major League Baseball might provide resources to historically black colleges without running afoul of NCAA rules.

Coaching clinics, regional television exposure and more savvy and urban-oriented marketing by Major League Baseball were among the other suggestions bounced around.

"You've got to be creative, you've got to be innovative," Forrester says of the various alternatives. He notes that the rapper Nelly loves baseball, wears St. Louis Cardinals gear and might be part of such a marketing campaign.

Time and effort will tell whether the evening was a hit or a miss, he says. "You've got to look at what's going to be done after the symposium."

Contact Michael Paul Williams at (804) 649-6815 or mwilliams@timesdispatch.com

This story can be found at:

<http://www.timesdispatch.com/news/your/richmond/MGB3TFD1UJD.html>



For Immediate Release
August 8, 2004

Contact: William Forrester Jr.
phone: (804) 264-6172
E-mail: mjbl@erols.com

BOBBY BONDS MEMORIAL SYMPOSIUM

RICHMOND, Va. – Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) receive national attention in addressing the decline of African-Americans participating in or national pastime. **“The Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium on the Survival of Historical Black Colleges and Universities Baseball Programs ”** will seek to rekindle African-American interest in the sport by bolstering baseball programs at HBCUs. The discussion is scheduled for 2 p.m. Aug. 22 at the Holiday Inn Central, 3207 N. Boulevard in Richmond.

The symposium will launch an effort to secure from Major League Baseball (MLB) \$10 million over the next five years to increase the participation of African-American youth in baseball, with HBCU baseball programs as a focal point. Leading that effort is a committee whose members include **Patricia Bonds**, the widow of Bobby Bonds; baseball great **Willie Mays**; and **John Young**, founder of the Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI) program.

“The proposal submitted to MLB is comprehensive in nature,” said William Forrester Jr., the meeting’s convener and Executive Director of the Metropolitan Junior Baseball League, a Major League Baseball-affiliated program that serves inner-city kids in Richmond. It includes having MLB apply for a partnership with AmeriCorps whereby HBCU students will be the designated service providers. “Through HBCUs we want to teach African-American youth the game of baseball, address the social ills which prevent many of our youth from excelling in the game, and open the door for internships in MLB’s front office.”

Jimmie Lee Solomon, Major League Baseball's Senior Vice President, Baseball Operations, who was recently listed as the 7th most influential minority in sports by Sports Illustrated, is among the panelists scheduled to discuss this proposal and several other issues.

Joining Solomon are former Major League Baseball standouts **Dave Stewart**, a four-time 20-game winner for the Oakland Athletics; former Atlanta Braves outfielder and National League Batting Champion **Ralph Garr** ; and **Jim "Mudcat" Grant**, who won 21 games for the 1965 pennant-winning Minnesota Twins, and one of twelve African American 20-game winners in Major League Baseball history.

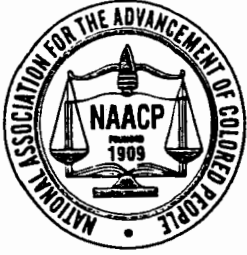
Other panelists are **Steve Baker**, president and chief executive officer of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics; **Roger Cador**, head baseball coach at Southern University; **J.D. Elliby** of the Major League Baseball Scouting Bureau; **Dan Montgomery**, a top scout for the Colorado Rockies ; and **Steve "Preacher" Williams**, a top scout for the Detroit Tigers.

As an example of what is at stake, Forrester cites one of Cador's former Southern University players, infielder **Rickie Weeks**. Weeks, lightly recruited out of high school, was the number-two pick in Major League Baseball's 2003 First Year Player Draft.

"Kids that could blossom into something special just need a little more time," Forrester said. "There won't be anywhere for them to go if there aren't HBCU programs."

Amtrak, Major League Baseball , Metropolitan Junior Baseball League, and Verizon are sponsoring the symposium, which is free and open to the public.

###



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
4805 MT. HOPE DRIVE • BALTIMORE, MD 21215-3297 • (410) 358-8900

KWEISI MFUME
President & Chief Executive Officer

November 4, 2004

Mr. William Forester, Jr.
Metropolitan Junior Baseball League
10405 Brickerton Drive
Mechanicsville, VA 23116

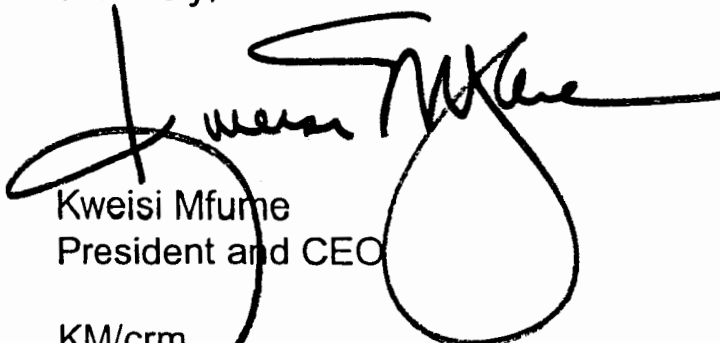
Dear Mr. Forester:

On behalf of the NAACP family, it is with pleasure that I take this opportunity to offer my thoughts on the Junior Baseball League's proposal to partner with Major League Baseball to provide financial assistance to HBCUs for collegiate baseball programs.

Of the myriad of reasons why this proposal is so valuable to our communities, one is that it requires participating HBCUs to develop outreach programs. These programs will include tutoring, mentoring and baseball coaching for socially and economically disadvantaged youth in the area, and these services will be provided by the students from the participating HBCUs. This effort will not only improve the quality of HBCU baseball programs, but will also improve community opportunities for young people.

I believe that this proposal will benefit everyone involved with it, and extend my full support and best wishes for success.

Sincerely,



Kweisi Mfume
President and CEO

KM/crm



A.G. Gaston Building
1527 5th Avenue N., 3rd Floor
Birmingham, AL. 35203
Telephone: (205) 320-0263
Fax: (205) 297-9820

September 14, 2004

Mr. William Forrester Jr.
Executive Director
Metropolitan Junior Baseball League
P. O. Box 9841
Richmond, VA 23228

Dear William,

With this letter, I extend my support to the Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium on the Survival of Historical Black College and Universities Baseball Programs. The Metropolitan Junior Baseball League proposal would enable members of our conference to obtain additional scholarship money to bring young men to our universities to receive an education and to play baseball.

Additionally, the partnership with AmeriCorps mentioned in the proposal, will afford our students financial assistance while they strive to strengthen the communities surrounding their universities. We totally support the concept of our students serving as role models, and tutors, as well as baseball coaches to youth in low-income areas.

Please let me know of any assistance needed for this effort. We hope Major League Baseball will seriously consider a partnership with the Metropolitan Junior Baseball League, for it will surely help support HBCU baseball programs.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Vowels, Jr.
Commissioner

Eastern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

1463 Grantland Place
Greensboro, North Carolina 27410

William Forrester, Jr.
Executive Director
Metropolitan Junior Baseball League
P.O. Box 9841
Richmond, VA 23228



Dear Mr. Forrester,

On behalf of the Eastern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (EIAC), I would like to extend my support to the Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium on the Survival of Historical Black Colleges and Universities Baseball Programs. The Metropolitan Junior Baseball League proposal would enable members of our conference to obtain additional scholarship money to bring young men to our universities to receive an education and to play baseball. Additional, the partnership with AmeriCorps mentioned in the proposal will afford our students financial assistance while they strive to strengthen the communities surrounding their college or university. We totally support the concept of our students serving as role models and tutors, as well as baseball coaches to youth in under-privileged areas.

Please let me know anything I can do to help with this effort to have Major League Baseball and the Metropolitan Junior Baseball League partner to support HBCU baseball programs.

ALLEN UNIVERSITY
Columbia, S.C.

BARBER-SCOTIA COLLEGE
Concord, N.C.

CLAFLIN UNIVERSITY
Orangeburg, S.C.

DWARD WATERS COLLEGE
Jacksonville, FL.

MORRIS COLLEGE
Sumter, S.C.

VOORHEES COLLEGE
Denmark, S.C.

DR. JIMMY JENKINS, CHAIR
Council of Presidents

KEN FREE
Commissioner

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Free". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ken Free
EIAC Commissioner

MID-EASTERN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

102 NORTH ELM STREET, SUITE 401 • P.O. BOX 21205 GREENSBORO, NC 27420-1205 • www.meacsports.com

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

BETHUNE-COOKMAN COLLEGE
Daytona Beach, FL

December 2, 2004

COPPIN STATE COLLEGE
Baltimore, MD

William Forrester, Jr.
Executive Director
Metropolitan Junior Baseball League
P O Box 9841
Richmond, VA 23228

DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY
Dover, DE

FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY
Tallahassee, FL

Dear Mr. Forrester:

HAMPTON UNIVERSITY
Hampton, VA

On behalf of the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) I would like to extend my support to the Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium on the survival of Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Baseball Programs. The Metropolitan Junior Baseball League proposal would enable members of our conference to obtain additional scholarship money to bring young men to our universities to receive an education and to play baseball. We totally support the concept of our student athletes serving as role models, and tutors, as well baseball coaches to youth in under-privileged areas.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY
Washington, DC


Please apprise me of anything I can do to help with this effort to have Major League Baseball and the Metropolitan Junior Baseball League partner to support HBCU baseball programs.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
EASTERN SHORE
Princess Anne, MD

MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Baltimore, MD

Sincerely,

NORFOLK STATE UNIVERSITY
Norfolk, VA


Dennis E. Thomas, Ed. D.
Commissioner

N.C. A&T STATE UNIVERSITY
Greensboro, NC

DET:klg

S.C. STATE UNIVERSITY
Orangeburg, SC

Dennis E. Thomas, Ed. D.
Commissioner

Phone: 336-275-9961 • Admin. Fax: 336-275-6727 • Media Fax: 336-275-9964

ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

CAMPUS BOX 900, ELIZABETH CITY, NC 27909
252-335-3388 • FAX: 252-335-3627



August 20, 2004

Mr. William Forrester
P.O. Box 9841
Richmond, Virginia 23228

Mr. Forrester,

It is with great pleasure that I extend greetings to you on behalf of the Athletic Department at Elizabeth City State University. We at ECSU would like to offer our support and congratulations to you and your colleagues on hosting the First Annual Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium. The issues and concerns that the symposium will address are paramount for the future of youth, high school and collegiate baseball. Your efforts and the efforts of your colleagues should be commended for having the foresight and vision for addressing the future of our young people through the medium of sport. We at ECSU join with you in moving the agenda forward for the survival of baseball at HBCU institutions. If at any time our Baseball Coach or I can ever be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Again, congratulations and best wishes for a successful symposium.

Sincerely,

Dr. Edward McLean, Athletic Director





James E. Shepard, Founder

Office of the Chancellor

July 1, 2004

William M.T. Forrester, Jr.
Executive Director
P.O. Box 9841
Richmond, VA

Dear Mr. Forrester:

We are currently exploring bringing back intercollegiate baseball to North Carolina Central University (NCCU). This symposium will enhance our efforts as we seek to find innovative ways to finance our program.

We will have a representative attend the symposium on August 22, 2004. Thanks you for the invitation.

Sincerely,

Dr. James H. Ammons
Chancellor



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF GREATER HAMPTON ROADS**

October 7, 2004

Boys & Girls Clubs
of Greater Hampton Roads
P.O. Box 755
Newport News, VA 23607
Tel 757-247-1364
Fax 757-247-0805

Mr. William Forrester, Jr.
P. O. Box 9841
Richmond, VA 23228

Hampton Roads Boys & Girls Club
629 Hampton Avenue
Newport News, VA 23607

Citizens Boys & Girls Club
1815 Shell Road
Hampton, VA 23661
Tel 757-244-6610
Fax 757-244-1912

Dear Mr. Forrester:

Officers
Dwayne B. Blake
President
Alfred McQueen, Ph.D.
First Vice President
Glenn L. Hughes
Second Vice President
~~Jerald Hickmann~~
Secretary
Otis H. Smith, Jr.
Treasurer
LaVerne P. Yeldell
Chaplain
Rev. Dr. Isaac McDonald
Assistant Chaplain

It was brought to my attention the initiative that has been undertaken by the Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium Committee. I commend you for your efforts and wholeheartedly endorse this initiative.

Board Members
Wallace Arnold
Duane Boone
David Epps
Tom Gear
Everette A. Hicks, Sr.
William A. Hines, Jr.
William D. Holloman, Jr.
Patricia Hayes-Holman
Atty. Cynthia Eppes Hudson
Mary W. Jackson
John H. Jones, Jr.
Wayne Jones
Dr. Wayne D. Lett
Vernard Lynch
Charles W. Mason
David A. Mater
Henry Mills, Jr.
Randolph Picott
Turner Spencer, Ph.D.
Joycelyn Spight
Atty. Marqueta Tyson
Lee Vreeland
George E. Wallace
Walter E. Washington
J. Howard Whitaker
Jimmie L. Williams, Jr.

I am a director at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Hampton Roads in Newport News and Hampton, Virginia, and we are sorely in need of African American role models to work with our kids. Through the concepts which you have developed, we could be afforded that assistance through students from Hampton and Norfolk State universities. These college students would inspire our kids to continue their education and strive to attend college.

Please keep me informed on this status of your proposal to Major League Baseball.

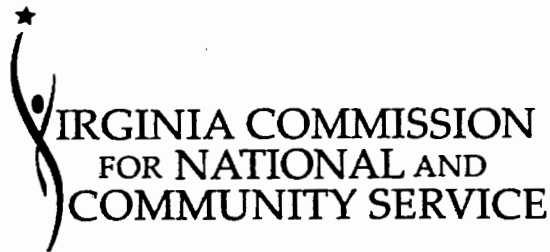
Sincerely,

James A. Johnson
Executive Director

Executive Director
James A. Johnson



A United Way Member Agency
#7015



September 27, 2004

Mr. William Forrester, Jr.
Executive Director
Metropolitan Junior Baseball League
P. O. Box 9841
Richmond, VA 23228-9841

Title: Virginia Commission for National and Community Service Sub-grant
MJBL Collaborative Initiative

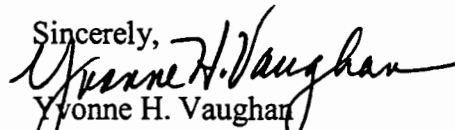
Dear Mr. Forrester:

I am pleased to inform you that sub-grant number GNCS-04-09-10 for the above-referenced grant program has been approved in the amount of \$7,927. Your agency is to provide a match in the amount of \$30,143.

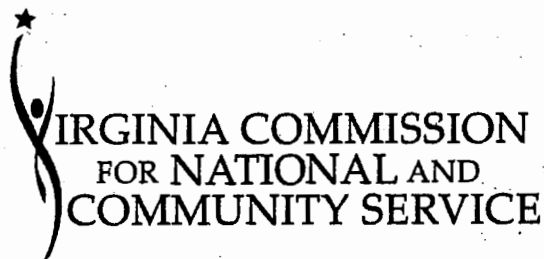
Enclosed you will find a Statement of Sub-grant Award/Acceptance and a Statement of Sub-grant Award Special Conditions. Please review the conditions carefully, as some may require action on your part before we will disburse sub-grant funds. To indicate your acceptance of the award and conditions, please sign the award acceptance and return it to me at the Virginia Department of Social Services, 7 North 8th St., 5th Floor, Richmond, VA 23219 by October 7, 2004. Please make a copy to maintain for your files.

When we receive documentation showing that your agency has complied with the conditions, your agency will be eligible to request reimbursement under this sub-grant on a monthly basis. We cannot process any requests for reimbursement until we have received and approved all required information.

We appreciate your interest in this grant program and look forward to working with you to assure your project's success. If you have any questions, please call me at (804)726-7067.

Sincerely,

Yvonne H. Vaughan
Grant Administrator

Enclosures



June 7, 2004

Mr. William Forrester Jr.
Metropolitan Junior Baseball League
P.O. Box 9841
Richmond, VA 23228

Dear Mr. Forrester:

On behalf of the Virginia Commission for National and Community Service, I am pleased to inform you that your application for 2004-05 AmeriCorps funding has been tentatively approved pending final authorization from the Corporation for National and Community Service and satisfactory revisions to your application. Please be aware that the anticipated amount of funding for planning grants has been reduced due to availability of funds. The final amount of your award will be forthcoming.

~~As part of the review process, the application was extensively evaluated by an outside review panel~~ as well as Commission staff. The attached review summary will provide important information related to your application. The review panel and staff identified strengths as well as areas in need of revision. Please review these comments and make the necessary revisions to your application and submit **one** modified copy **no later** than Wednesday, June 16 to: Virginia Commission for National and Community Service; Attn. Steve Whitman; 5th Floor, 7 North Eighth Street; Richmond, VA 23219. The modified application **must** clearly identify the required revisions using bold headers or explanatory notes where new or revised information is provided.

In addition, all approved applicants must enter their applications into eGrants, a web-based application system. The Commission has scheduled two training sessions to equip you for the e-Grants process. The trainings are scheduled for **Wednesday, June 23 and Thursday, June 24, from 2:00-3:00pm**. Participation in one of the sessions is **mandatory**. Since the training is web-based no travel will be required.

In order to confirm your participation and provide you the necessary details on the training, please provide the following information via email to sjw900@dss.state.va.us **no later** than Friday, June 11:

1. Organization name
2. Individual's name who will be participating in the eGrants training.
3. Phone number.
4. Reliable email address for correspondence related to the training.
5. Date you prefer to participate (June 23 or 24)

Again, congratulations! We look forward to working with you in the coming service year. If you have any questions as it relates to this process, feel free to contact Steve Whitman at 804.726.7068.

Sincerely,

B.J. Northington
Executive Director
Virginia Commission for National and Community Service

RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

301 NORTH NINTH STREET RICHMOND, VA 23219-1927



RONALD L. CAREY, Ed.D.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

tel: (804) 780-7614
fax: (804) 780-7515
e-mail: rcarey@richmond.k12.va.us

December 1, 2004

William Forrester, Jr.
Executive Director
Metropolitan Junior Baseball League Inc.
P.O. Box 9841
Richmond Va.23228

Dear Mr. Forrester:

On behalf of Richmond Public Schools we are extremely pleased to be involved with the AmeriCorps portion of the proposal developed by the Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium Committee. Virginia Union University (VUU) students will serve as mentors, role models and tutors at ten of our elementary schools. The proposed plan will afford three VUU students at each school. They will be assigned third, fourth and fifth grade classes. The targeted schools have a large percentage of at-risk youth and many of them reside in public housing. From this program over 1800 youth will receive positive reinforcement from VUU students on a daily basis.

I strongly support this concept and hopefully it can be duplicated in other school systems across the country. This initiative has the capability to make a positive change in the lives of our African American youth and their communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald L. Carey".

Ronald L. Carey, Ed.D.
Executive Director

Collaborative Partners

- ◆ AmeriCorps
- ◆ Boys and Girls Clubs
- ◆ Boy Scouts
- ◆ Rec and Parks
- ◆ Richmond Public Schools
- ◆ Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority
- ◆ Team Up Richmond
- ◆ YMCA



MJBL Girl Scouts

Targeted Locations

- ◆ Hotchkiss
- ◆ Mary Scott
- ◆ Battery Park
- ◆ Summer Hill
- ◆ Westover
- ◆ Blackwell
- ◆ Bellmeade
- ◆ Mosby
- ◆ Whitcomb
- ◆ Powhatan
- ◆ Randolph
- ◆ Bill Robinson
- ◆ Broad Rock
- ◆ Creighton
- ◆ Fairfield
- ◆ Reid
- ◆ Fonticello
- ◆ Gilpin

Additional sites may be established.

Conclusion

The camaraderie from a team sport and athletic competition will instill a sense of pride and belonging in our youth. The education and life skills components will become interwoven with the team sport. This will enable our youth to develop a sense of pride in their school and community. This 5-year initiative will result in an increased number of teenage youth participating in our national pastime, the game of baseball, and making them productive citizens.

“Step Up To The Plate”



William Forrester, Jr., Executive Director
Godfrey Pinn, Chairman of the Board

(804) 264-6172

METROPOLITAN JUNIOR BASEBALL LEAGUE, INC.



Collaborative Five-Year Initiative

Goal

To use baseball as a vehicle to steer at-risk youth into productive citizens.

Objectives

- ◆ To increase the number of participants
- ◆ To maximize resources through collaborative efforts from youth organizations
- ◆ To provide life skills training to participants
- ◆ To assist participants academically and socially through a tutorial, computer lab and cultural enrichment programs
- ◆ To minimize youth violence thereby saving lives and building bridges

Targeted Audience

- ◆ *Economically disadvantaged youth ages 5-15*
- ◆ *800 the first year to 1200 by year five*

Baseball

Program Structure

- ◆ Baseball and girls softball will be used to attract youth participation
- ◆ There will be no fee charged for individuals to play
- ◆ MJBL represents the City of Richmond in MLB's RBI Program
- ◆ Season starts in May and ends in August



Whitcomb Court 9-12 Team



*Sumnerhill 9-12 Team
Mike Berry, Coach*

Education

Academic Challenge

- ◆ Tutorial sites and cultural enrichment program start in September and end in May
- ◆ Provide mentoring and counseling to our league participants
- ◆ Track academic progress via nine week report cards
- ◆ 85 percent of tutorial participants maintain or increase their GPA



League member at MJBL's computer lab



League members at Harper's Ferry, West Virginia

Goals/Objectives

The overall goal and objective of this symposium is:

- ✓ To ensure the survival of existing baseball programs at HBCU's.
- ✓ To facilitate in the establishment or re-establishment of baseball programs at HBCU's.
- ✓ To improve the overall quality of HBCU's baseball programs.

Scheduled Events

- ✓ Celebrity Golf Tournament - Friday
- ✓ MIBL Classic featuring youth teams throughout the East Coast including a national RBI all-star team. Games Friday - Sunday
- ✓ Coaches clinic conducted by former MLB player Jim Bibby and Atlanta Braves scout Robert Lucas. - Saturday Morning
- ✓ Classic Banquet - Saturday Evening
- ✓ Symposium - Sunday
- ✓ Lottery drawing with 3 universities receiving at least a \$1,000 scholarship toward their baseball program.

Donations and contributions can be made to The Metropolitan Junior Baseball League P. O. Box 9841, Richmond, VA 23228

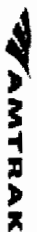
The Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium

Bobby Bonds was instrumental in the development of the initial HBCU baseball symposium. He was passionate about having African American youth compete in the game of baseball. He endorsed the idea of having HBCU baseball programs as the focal point to achieve this objective. Bonds was scheduled to attend and participate as a panelist last year at the first annual HBCU baseball symposium. However, he was taken ill and unable to attend. Bobby Bonds died August 23, 2003, and in his honor we are changing the name of our 2nd annual HBCU baseball symposium to the First Annual Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium on the Survival of Historical Black Colleges and Universities Baseball Programs.

The 1st Annual Bobby Bonds Memorial Symposium on the Survival of Historical Black Colleges and Universities Baseball Programs



Sponsored by the Metropolitan Junior Baseball League, Major League Baseball and Amtrak



Background

The annual symposium for the survival of historical black colleges and universities (HBCU) baseball programs was conceived due to the apparent struggle HBCU's are having in trying to offer baseball as a collegiate sport at their respective universities. This symposium is designed to identify the obstacles HBCU's face in trying to field competitive baseball programs. We will explore the possibility of establishing a relationship with Major League Baseball which will mutually benefit both entities. We have identified individuals who possess a wealth of baseball knowledge to address the various issues which we believe are of paramount importance for HBCU's baseball programs to survive and prosper.

Please mark this date on your calendar and plan to attend this historic symposium. There is no charge to attend. Please contact William Forrester, Jr. by email at mbjl@erols.com or call (804) 264-6172 to confirm your attendance.

Invited Panelists and Topics

2 p.m. • August 22
Holiday Inn Central
3207 N. Boulevard
Richmond, VA 23230
(804) 359-9441

Speakers

Steve Baker
President, NAIA

Roger Cador
Head Coach

Southern University

J. D. Elliby

Major League Baseball
Scouting Bureau

Ralph Garr

Former MLB Player

Jim (Mud Cat) Grant

Former MLB Player

Dan Montgomery

National Crosschecker
Detroit Tigers

Jimmie Lee Solomon

Senior VP, Baseball Operations
Major League Baseball

Dave Stewart

Former MLB Player

Preacher Williams

National Crosschecker
Colorado Rockies

Topics of Discussion

- ✓ Revisit the progress on two topics from last year's symposium:
 - Having MLB buy-in to HBCU's plight (prepare full-blown proposal to MLB requesting their assistance) to ensure that baseball continues to be a viable program at HBCU's.
 - HBCU's giving back to inner-city youth baseball programs. (Internships/work study/academic credits for coaching youth baseball programs in their city during the summer).
- ✓ Linking the African American baseball player with the HBCU's.
- ✓ How to get HBCU's presidents involved in their baseball programs.
- ✓ Create an advisory council of former HBCU/MLB baseball players.
- ✓ How to make HBCU baseball programs self-sustaining.
- ✓ Which national governing association is best suited for HBCU baseball programs.

2004 HBCU Events Budget

	Expenditure	Amount
Classic		
	Umpires*	5,000.00
	Insurance	525.00
	Virginia Umpires Independent Assoc.	507.00
	Richmond Braves	2,000.00
	Baseballs **	657.00
	VSU Band Transportation	900.00
	Food	630.00
		10,219.00
Total Classic		
Banquet		
	Banquet	3,159.78
	Banquet Invitations	381.29
		3,541.07
Total Banquet		
Golf Tourney		
	Brickshire Golf	2,090.00
	Food	375.00
	Lodging	500.00
		2,965.00
Total Golf Tourney		
2004 Projected Symposium Budget		
Lodging		\$ 560.00
	4 speakers @ \$70 for 2 nights	
Facility		200.00
	Holiday-Inn Ballroom	
AV Equipment		150.00
Air Transportation		1,632.00
	San Diego Calif.	536.00
	Baton Rouge, La.	281.00
	San Francisco, Calif.	500.00
	Houston, Tex.	315.00
Ground Transportation		320.00
	4 persons @ \$80 roundtrip	
Meals		230.00
Scholarship Money		9,000.00
	3 universities @ \$3,000	
Administrative Costs		3,000.00
Total Symposium		\$ 15,092.00
TOTAL BUDGET		\$ 31,817.07

* 2 umpires @ \$40 per game for 40 games for 16-18

**20 dozens @ \$32.85