



Fort Wayne RBI:

Mission, Vision, Values



Baseball has gone through many changes and evolutions in its history. This is to be expected of a sport that has been around for over 150 years. Most of these changes have made the game better, safer, and more inclusive. Recently, however, American baseball has regressed in several of these areas. As baseball in the late 20th and 21st century has developed, less American born minorities are playing, less players from large urban areas are playing, and baseball is becoming a sport where only those with large resource capabilities are excelling. The World Baseball Academy has seen that this financial and socioeconomic gap is increasing.

The WBA, located in Fort Wayne, IN, is dedicated to growing the game of baseball worldwide. They work with players at every level of amateur and professional baseball, to provide programming for youth players. Their mission statement reads:

The World Baseball Academy mission is to use the game of baseball to provide services for athletes that encourage life skills development, aid in eliminating discrimination and cross cultural barriers while increasing the interest of baseball on a local, national, and international level.

As the staff and Board of Directors worked with the players in their programs, they noticed a need for inner-city baseball in Fort Wayne, IN. It just so happened, serving the needs of inner-city youth matches perfectly with their aforementioned mission statement, and the WBA decided to move forward with fully funding players for an RBI Baseball program at the WBA's ASH Centre facility. The program is slated to begin in April, 2010.



What is RBI?

RBI as an acronym developed by Major League Baseball, which stands for, "Reviving Baseball in Inner-city's." MLB, along with the Boys and Girls Club of America has started youth baseball programs all over the country. RBI programs have been started in 185 U.S. cities, serving as many as 120,000 boys and girls, MLB says.

While many of the programs nationwide have been started through the Boys and Girls Club, there are cities where other service organizations have taken the key role in starting the league, and the staff at Major League Baseball has given us confidence that such a structure can be successful.

Why RBI?

The WBA has been sensitive to the relationships we have established, and RBI has been a great partner. Major League Baseball has made a commitment to the program and the WBA has used some high level, well-established relationships to ensure that the Fort Wayne chapter is successful. While the WBA's top priority is developing a quality *leadership* training program and not specifically an "RBI" program, there are some advantages to being affiliated with RBI. Major League Baseball invests in a national ad campaign to support the program every year, has staff devoted to developing the program nationwide, and has a national tournament structure that is easy to tie into. An affiliation with an organization with the status of Major League Baseball, while not absolutely crucial, can be very beneficial.

Why the WBA? Why the ASH Center?

The WBA is uniquely positioned to run a top quality leadership program for at risk youth. The WBA is experienced in baseball development, event planning, and implementation. We also have the resources available to bring on a full time RBI Director. Most importantly, however, are the connections the WBA has made by reaching out to Fort Wayne's other baseball programs and service organizations at every level. We are focused on making RBI a community-wide, collaborative effort.

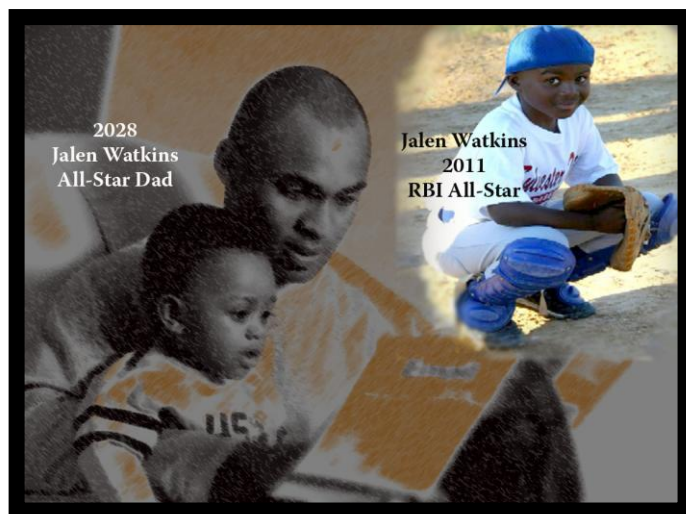
Our efforts have aligned well with the mission of the ASH center, who is focused on getting non-profit organizations to collaborate and support one another. The ASH Center is located near where many of our target players live. We envision the program growing, and the ASH center has plenty of space to accommodate. An additional advantage is that the facility has a large indoor fieldhouse, which can be used for year round programming. At risk kids will not only get solid training and an opportunity to play, they will get to do so at a top-level facility.

Our Mission:

The Fort Wayne RBI mission is to use the game of baseball to provide leadership development and life skills training for at risk youth while breaking down cross-cultural barriers, and modeling strong family units; the program seeks to develop future community and family leaders who give back to community and seek to serve others.

Our Vision:

Our vision is a program of long-term commitment. We have structured the program, in a way, where players can work their way up and literally be involved for life. We are truly seeking year-round, life-long relationships with our participants, guiding them into adulthood where they are immensely impactful family and community leaders. Our season never ends, and more importantly, our relationship with players never ends.



Our Values:

The WBA is an organization that enjoys baseball, but has a passion for developing leaders. The WBA's executive staff has a background in education. Baseball is our tool for educating young men to help them in their traditional education, family, and professional lives. The very nature of the game ensures that players develop life skills like teamwork, discipline, and how to deal with adversity. Because baseball provides this powerful platform, we feel RBI has the potential to develop life-long community servants and family leaders.