



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Underprivileged youth take trip of a lifetime to baseball camp in Maryland**

NAPLES, Fla. (Aug. 22, 2012) – Twenty-five underprivileged and at-risk students who attend the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County's after-school program received a trip of a lifetime when they hopped on an airplane for a five-day trip this summer to the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation overnight camp in Aberdeen, Md.

The Southwest Florida campers were among 100 10-14 year-old boys and girls from distressed communities in Mississippi, Georgia and Florida. The all-expenses-paid trip for the 25 students was made possible thanks to a grant provided by the Naples Children & Education Foundation, creators of Naples Winter Wine Festival.

While at camp, they learned baseball and softball skills; scaled a climbing wall; navigated a ropes course; watched special demonstrations from the U.S. Secret Service; and worked with volunteer coaches from the FBI. Leadership, team-building skills and making new friends were also part of the camp experience.

The students stayed at Sandy Hill Camp, a rustic campsite that sits on 211 acres of unspoiled forests, fields and beaches overlooking Chesapeake Bay. They traveled by bus each day to the Ripken Academy for baseball instruction.

"The majority of these students have never been on an airplane or to camp," said John Scot Mueller, NCEF trustee. "NCEF's grant committee was so grateful to the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation for agreeing to take all 25 kids, each of whom was truly deserving of this special experience. This baseball camp is also a great prelude to the introduction of the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation's Jay and Patty Baker Field, which is adjacent to the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County and will open soon for play."

"We are excited to provide a special experience to so many deserving youth across the country, including the children of Collier County," said Steve Salem, president and executive director of the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation. "Connecting these kids with positive role models from law enforcement can make a tremendous difference for both the kids and the officers. Our hope is that these children have fun and make new friends while learning how to stay out of trouble and make smart choices."

Since 2008, 40 young people from Collier County have participated in the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation camp in Maryland but this is the first summer that a large number was able to attend. Three chaperones from the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County accompanied the students and served as assistant coaches throughout the camp.

The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation was created by his sons Bill and Cal Ripken Jr. to build character and teach critical life lessons to disadvantaged youth. Their mission is to reach those kids using baseball as a platform.

Since 2000, Naples Children & Education Foundation, which is governed by NCEF trustees, has been dedicated to making a profound and sustaining improvement in the lives of underprivileged and at-risk children in Collier County, where pockets of poverty threaten thousands of children's ability to thrive. Through Naples Winter Wine Festival, NCEF has raised \$107 million since 2001, making it the most successful charity wine auction in the world. Proceeds have impacted more than 150,000 children through 38 charities, and major initiatives funded in collaboration with other private and public entities have included a pediatric dental clinic and an early learning center.

NCEF's chief fundraiser is the Naples Winter Wine Festival. The 2013 festival will take place Jan. 25-27. For more information about Naples Winter Wine Festival and Naples Children & Education Foundation, visit [www.napleswinefestival.com](http://www.napleswinefestival.com) or call 888-837-4919.



Photo caption:

**Chaperones Clark Fredstrom, Colleen Miller and Derrek Clemenson with children.jpg**

Thanks to a Naples Children & Education Foundation grant, 25 underprivileged and at-risk children from the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County attended a baseball summer camp in Maryland through the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation. Traveling with the students are their three chaperones: Clark Fredstrom (man in the front bottom), Colleen Miller (woman on the right) and Derrek Clemenson (man in the back left).

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