



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation unveils youth development park at  
Boys & Girls Club of Collier County**

NAPLES, Fla. (Nov. 13, 2012) – The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation, through a generous donation from Jay and Patty Baker, recently unveiled a multipurpose youth sports complex in Naples at the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County. Baker Field will provide underserved and at-risk youth with a safe place to play and participate in education and character development programs.

“When we started the foundation 11 years ago, we wanted to help kids and pay tribute to our dad,” said Cal Ripken Jr., MLB hall of famer and co-founder of the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation. “However, we never imagined we would be able to do so much for youth across the country. Without people like Jay and Patty Baker, this would not be possible. Because of their generous donation and support, hundreds of kids in Naples will benefit from this marvelous field.”

The ribbon cutting ceremony included guest speakers Cal Ripken Jr.; Jay and Patty Baker, former president of Kohl’s Corporation and chairman of the board of directors, Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation; John F. Sorrey III, Mayor of the City of Naples; Theresa Shaw, Boys & Girls Club of Collier County; John Jordan, trustee, Naples Children & Education Foundation; and Steve Salem, executive director of the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation.

“This is a wonderful day for the kids of Naples,” said Steve Salem. “We are excited to provide a positive, supportive environment for every child and are thankful to Jay and Patty Baker and our partners for their unwavering support and assistance.”

Baker has served as a board member of the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation since 2008 and was recently named chairman of the board of directors for the foundation in June, where he provides oversight and leadership to the organization. In February, Baker and his wife Patty received the Cal Ripken, Sr. Award at the eighth annual Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation Aspire Gala in honor of their philanthropic efforts.

“We are very proud of the new ballpark for underserved and at-risk children in a place that is so close to both Patty and my hearts,” said Jay Baker. “We have always been very involved with the Naples community, and it’s an exciting opportunity to create a field for the Boys & Girls Club that will ultimately give hundreds of at-risk youth a safe place to play.”

The youth development park is a \$1.5 million, state-of-the-art facility designed to be attractive, safe, fun, educational and stimulating. Baker Field will support not only the Ripken Foundation’s baseball- and softball-themed programs but also other youth sports programs such as soccer and flag football. The field features an artificial grass playing field provided by AstroTurf.

“Our organization is very thankful for the support of Jay and Patty Baker and the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation,” said Theresa Shaw, president and CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County. “Our youth will not only come to Baker Field to learn and enjoy the great games of baseball, softball and Quickball but they will achieve good character and citizenship through the Badges for Baseball program.”

A grant from Naples Children & Education Foundation helps fund Baker Field programs. The new complex is designed for Boys & Girls Club of Collier County daily activities and for weekend or

special community activities. Additionally, Baker Field will serve youth in the foster care system, children with special needs and young people at the county's emergency shelter.

"NCEF is pleased to support the sports and developmental programs taking place on Baker Field," said John Jordan, NCEF trustee. "These programs shape young lives and contribute to the well being of the whole child. They even the playing field for youth who have had a tough start in life."

This initiative is part of the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation's "Swing for the Future" campaign, which was developed to provide at-risk youth in select neighborhoods safe places to play and learn. The goal is to develop several unique, multipurpose, low-maintenance fields with synthetic turf provided by AstroTurf, which will provide a cohesive recreational and educational experience for underserved young people across the U. S. There are currently youth development parks operating in Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Texas.

The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation uses baseball- and softball-themed programs to help build character and teach critical life lessons to at-risk youth residing in America's most distressed communities. Founded in 2001 by members of the Ripken family in memory of their patriarch Cal Ripken Sr., the foundation works to create programs that positively impact disadvantaged youth through active community partnerships with America's most successful youth service organizations.

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Photo Caption:

**Boys & Girls Club.jpg**

Front - Jenndey Avendano, Olivia Wylie, Chantal Deville, Mackenzie Sondermeyer, Persia Cooper; Back - Ashley Leos, Sierra Haddox, Serena Frederic, Christel Jodesty, Brandy Mauricette

Contact:

Andrea Steffy, Gravina, Smith, Matte & Arnold Marketing and Public Relations, 239-275-5758;

[andrea@gsma.pro](mailto:andrea@gsma.pro)













