

Introduction to Rapids Baseball, Incorporated

Rapids Baseball Incorporated, or RBI as it is referred to, was incorporated in 2011. To fully understand and appreciate its mission, one should look first at the leadership of the Rapids Baseball program at James River High School. Parts of the mission of RBI have been imbedded in the Rapids Baseball program since Pete Schumacher and Greg Domisse began coaching the team together in 2007. Coach Schumacher and Coach Domisse wanted players to have a connection to the community and understand their responsibility to society when they hang up their cleats. These two teachers believe coaching baseball to be fulfilling; but teaching young men how to carry themselves in good times and bad, on and off the field, is the epitome of what is the best part.



In 2008, Rapids Baseball won its second state championship and parents were embarrassed by the state of the facility. A few leaders among them helped create a new varsity field with intent to then build a locker/restroom/concession facility. RBI came about from the parent who took the baton from the original group. As we were building the new facility through the James River Athletic Boosters, she saw the need for a more formal way to communicate and achieve our mission, which is broader than the James River High School Athletic Booster mission. She and another attorney created RBI as a 501(c)(3) organization and set up the framework for events and financial models to achieve the RBI mission. As Chair of our Board and Treasurer, she provides ongoing education to the RBI Officers about what a nonprofit is, and how it operates.

In 2014, we have six Board of Director members and five officers. The Directors provide guidance from a business perspective. In addition to Rapids coaches, RBI officers include a retired James River High School teacher/baseball coach and also includes the founder of RBI - a member of the Chesterfield County business community whose two sons graduated from James River High School/the Rapids Varsity baseball program, and who is our Treasurer.

The RBI Mission

RBI is on its way to provide a self-sustaining baseball program – a baseball program that will support its operating needs each baseball season, thus leaving more funds for other Athletic Booster needs. That is goal one. Our mission, however, also includes bringing resources and funds to the greater James River High School community through our efforts at the baseball facility. That is goal two. The mission, however, is much broader than James River High School and also encompasses the greater community. This is where the public-private partnership between the school, RBI and the community has the opportunity to impact kids in a very big way; building a stronger community for tomorrow.



Achieving the RBI Mission

Achieving the RBI mission includes having a successful Rapids Baseball program - a program that kids want to play for; good coaches want to coach for; and performance that attracts attention back to the events held at the facility. A key to the success of RBI includes keeping Rapids Baseball achieving its three-pronged mission of: building a team that can compete for the state title, building men of character and helping players achieve their ambition to play in college. Also key to the success of RBI is the support its leaders have had from the school administration – in particular its Principal and Activities Director in pioneering this concept.

However, RBI was created to provide a way to give back to more than just athletics at James River High School. We solicit sponsors for events and use those funds to help recruit assistance from other JRHS programs. For instance at our military appreciation game, we asked the James River NJROTC to present the colors and from our sponsorship, we paid them a small stipend, the same for Chorus when we asked for a student to sing the National Anthem. JRHS Athletic Boosters could not do that as their mission is limited to serving athletics at James River.

A main key to achieving the RBI mission also includes hosting events and tournaments at the baseball facility. The facility, now almost finished, includes privately financed lights and locker room/concession stand and a newly graded junior varsity field that is as good a field as the varsity field that was privately funded and finished in 2008. It is a facility that is practical for the team during its regular season and also useful to host tournament play and other youth events before and after the Rapids season. RBI is one-third through paying the light and building construction costs through its fundraising and events held at the field.



More than just James River focused, we have given food to the Central Virginia Foodbank which we collect in lieu of cash for a tournament gate fee; for two years we partnered with a like-minded organization and hosted Jeff Potter's Tour which in 2013 provided community service to a local nonprofit, Elk Hill Farm - a facility for youth whose needs can not be met by traditional schools and in 2012 the YMCA. In 2014 we are looking to partner with Meadowbrook High School to help their field and their baseball program do some of the things that RBI has done in its short two years.

Finally, RBI seeks sponsors for kids who can not afford to come to our camps or events but most importantly, the college showcase that RBI has hosted for the past two years in November. We seek many a “Diamond in the Rough” to match a college coach with a player who maybe would never have had the opportunity to go to college. We have had success and hope to add to that success in the years to come.

Youth Served and Events Hosted

RBI is energized by youth development and making a difference in the life of kids who may not have advantages at home, in athletics or in life. In 2014 we hosted a youth development camp for ages ranging from 6 to 12. We will host a number of these camps and unique small events at the field to draw local residents and the community.



With Bon Air Baptist Church, in 2013 RBI hosted Richard and Kathy Verlander, the parents of major league pitcher Justin Verlander. Their message is about parenting - not just parenting a prodigy, but how to stick with your mission as a parent. Youth focused.

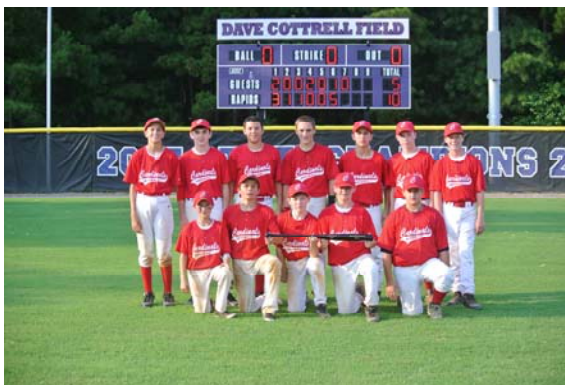
In 2012, RBI hosted the first Potter Tour. Jeff Potter has two tours for a team of kids who may never see a college field but get a great experience playing baseball, visiting cities and performing community service wherever they play. In 2013 Jeff Potter talked to parents about youth, baseball and giving back and how connected they are as part of the Potter Tour held at Dave Cottrell Field at James River High School.

In 2012, Richmond Flying Squirrels, Second Baseman and Minor League Gold Glove winner Ryan Cavan donated his time to host a youth clinic and gave the kids hope to achieve individual dreams with hard work and attitude. He spoke of his hard road to professional baseball and taught some of his baseball techniques and healthy life choices.

Success Stories

Our coaching staff enjoys developing players – whether it is for our program or a camp, the joy is seeing a player reach his goal. RBI leadership enjoy mentoring students at James River and those who have graduated out of JRHS to learn how to conduct a camp, how to cook food and maintain a profitable concession. We bring students into the events we host to teach skills they can not typically get in the classroom. Our student volunteers can receive community service and leadership volunteer hours for their participation. It is a network of interwoven James River High School and local community resources working together to mentor and give back to the greater community.

There are a number of player success stories for young men who have gone through the Rapids program or RBI camp. As an example in 2011, Kit Scheetz and Michael Trentham used their senior year leadership capstone project a golf tournament fundraiser and our RBI Treasurer was the parent advisor. Michael and Kit both went on to play for Virginia Tech and Randolph Macon, respectively. We have great support from the faculty at James River, especially the Leadership Program, to help develop students while working with a parent on a fundraising project. It is the perfect partnership – the local community and James River.



Contact Information and Donation Information

RBI's website, www.rbibaseballonline.com has a PayPal resource to make a donation. Alternatively, a check may be mailed to the address is on the website. Questions can be sent to our e-mail address or be answered by contacting our Treasurer Lisa Germano at 804.379.4900.

Our current schedule is on the website and there is a registration page to send us contact information. Baseball teams can sign up for tournaments on our website and can e-mail us if they want to set up their own tournament. RBI leadership as well as James River students will work onsite with them to do what is needed to host the games.



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