



NEWS RELEASE



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JOIN THE MAJOR LEAGUES @ YOUR LIBRARY PROGRAM TOUR STOPS IN CINCINNATI

Presentation will also feature various aspects of the Breaking Barriers Program

The *Join The Major Leagues @ your library™™™* program tour will stop in Cincinnati on Thursday, May 22 at 12:00 p.m. (EDT) for a presentation at the Public Library of Cincinnati & Hamilton County by Jana Perry, Manager, Educational Programming and Community Affairs for Major League Baseball, Larry Corbus, Corbus Library Consultants and representatives from the Cincinnati Reds.

During the "Join The Major Leagues @ your library" event, Perry, Corbus and the Reds representatives will address a group of Cincinnati area students to discuss the importance of 21st Century literacy skills and utilizing the vast resources available at the library. A pre-game ceremony is planned at Great American Ball Park prior to the 7:10 p.m. (EDT) Reds game vs. the Atlanta Braves.

Additionally, various aspects of *Breaking Barriers* – a program that presents motivating, baseball-themed activities that reinforce literacy skills, mathematics, science and social history in addition to addressing critical issues of character development, such as conflict resolution and self-esteem – will be incorporated into the presentation. This part of the program will include a discussion about Jackie Robinson and the values he embodied and a special ceremony honoring two 2003 *Breaking Barriers* essay contest finalists from the Cincinnati-area – fourth graders Benjamin Klein and Marquisa Hankins. The student's essays were selected from a pool of nearly 10,000 entries, the largest number of submissions in the program's history. The *Breaking Barriers* essay contest encourages children to write about a barrier or obstacle they have faced or are still facing in their lives, and how they used the values exemplified by Jackie Robinson to deal with those obstacles.

The centerpiece of the 2003 "Join The Major Leagues @ your library" program is the "Join The Major Leagues @ your library" contest. This nationwide, online baseball trivia competition challenges participants to utilize the myriad resources available at the library to answer four questions of increasing difficulty – one for each base on a baseball diamond. Contestants who hit a home run by answering every question correctly are entered into the national drawing. The grand prize winner receives a pair of tickets to a 2003 Major League Baseball World Series® game. Twelve first-prize contest winners will receive gift packages that include a copy of the book "Jackie's Nine: Values to Live By" by Sharon Robinson, a "Join The Major Leagues @ your library" T-shirt and a Jackie Robinson READ poster from ALA graphics.

The library staff at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, NY developed this year's baseball trivia questions in consultation with American Library Association (ALA) members. Trivia questions are divided into four "playbooks" corresponding to different age groups (children up to age 10; ages 11-13; 14-17; and 18 and older) and are organized by increasing difficulty to test a variety of information skill levels.

Another major component of this year's "Join The Major Leagues @ your library" program is an outreach to the Latino community. Aspects of this outreach include a new Spanish-language Web site featuring a bibliography of Spanish-language books and films, and a host of springtime local events promoting the program.

In addition to the "Join The Major Leagues @ your library" contest, Major League Baseball and the ALA will once again sponsor the library promotion contest – a competition for the best local promotion tied to the program. The winning library will receive a weekend prize package including tickets to the 2003 Major League Baseball All-Star Game in Chicago and an event at their library hosted by Sharon Robinson.

"Join The Major Leagues @ your library" is a program developed by Major League Baseball, the Major League Baseball Players Association and the American Library Association (ALA). The program celebrates and promotes two of America's oldest institutions: baseball and libraries, while heightening awareness of 21st Century literacy skills, specifically the use of computers and other media to obtain information and improve communication. For additional information on "Join The Major Leagues @ your library program" and contest, visit www.ala.org/@yourlibrary/jointhemajorleagues.

Developed in 1997 by Major League Baseball, the Major League Baseball Players Trust for Children and Scholastic, Inc., *Breaking Barriers* is multi-curricular classroom educational program designed to teach children the values and traits necessary to deal with the barriers, obstacles and challenges in their lives. Using baseball as a metaphor for life, the curriculum – which was expanded this year from grades 4-6 to K-12 – is based on the values demonstrated by the late Jackie Robinson, who broke the Major League Baseball color barrier in 1947. Those values are persistence, courage, integrity, justice, teamwork, citizenship, determination, commitment, and excellence.

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