



Center for Neighborhood Enterprise

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For Immediate Release

CNE Salutes: Youth Coach Chosen for MLB Scout Development Program

Coaches are important mentors and fatherly figures for inner city kids who often have a lack of positive role models in their lives. CNE salutes Mr. Brian Boles. Brian has been a High School Teacher at St. Frances Academy, as well as the school's varsity baseball coach in Baltimore, Maryland. Like many such inner city schools, St. Frances lacked an adequate practice facility that included a batting cage. In response, Coach Boles raised the funds to have one built (Please see link: <http://baltimore.cbslocal.com/2011/09/17/md-baseball-player%E2%80%99s-foundation-keeps-game-alive-for-st-frances-academy/>). He is an additional inspiration to the kids as he has been a scout for the MLB team the Detroit Tigers.

Brian Boles was recently selected to attend the Scout Development program hosted by the Major League Baseball Scouting Bureau in Phoenix Arizona to cultivate his skills. When CNE caught up with him, we were able to ask Coach Boles what the school was like.

Read the following article that he wrote in response to our question. From this article, you will see how he is a living example for inner city youth to show them the results that come from pursuing your passion.

Opportunity of a Life-Time at the Major League Baseball Scouting Bureau's "Scout School" (Scout Development Program)

Written by Brian Boles

An opportunity of a life-time came along when I was selected by the Detroit Tigers organization to attend the Major League Scouting Bureau's scout development program in Phoenix, Arizona. The 26th Scout Development Program is a two week (September 25-October 8, 2011) program that was started by the legendary Mr. Don Pries. The purpose of the program is to provide individuals an opportunity to learn about how to scout and create a foundation on what the job entails. This is a very selective process to be invited to the program and each participant must have a sponsor from a Major Baseball League [MLB] organization or self-sponsor. I was fortunate to get sponsorship via the Detroit Tigers, whom I serve as a recommending scout, in Maryland.

There were a total of 68 students in this class, which is the largest in the history of the program. Two noteworthy individuals in attendance were former MLB players Jacque Jones and Tom %lash+Gordon (both were as cool as a fan). They fit in as one of the guys and were about the business of learning. The program opened up on Sunday with an orientation of what we could expect for the next two weeks and introductions. We received a thick manual, name tag and straw hat with a MLB logo. The orientation was lead by MLSB's director Frank Marcos and lead instructor Mike Larson. The day ended with a delicious

dinner and a homework reading assignment. I had an idea of what to expect from this program and I was very anxious to get started.

The official day one started with the class traveling to a Fall Instructional League game, with one of the focus on how to grade arm strength. Students were divided into smaller groups of 5-6 students, with an assigned instructor. My group's instructor was Rusty Gerhardt, a Baltimore native and MLSB scout. My group included Craig Griffey, brother of Ken Griffey Jr. and Justine Siegel, who reportedly was the first woman to serve on the coaching staff of a men's professional team. On day two, after our morning meeting, the class traveled to another Fall Instructional League game and each student was given two players to take notes on, and to create scouting reports. Once we got back to the hotel's meeting room, we began the process of learning how to create a scouting report. The process of completing a scouting report is a very detailed and comprehensive process. One of the key phrases mentioned was "make words equal numbers and your numbers equal words." The numbers refer to the numerical value on the grading scale ascending from 2-8. Whereas, two (2) is poor; three (3) is well below average; four (4) is below average; five (5) is average [compares to the average MLB player]; six (6) is good; seven (7) is very good and eight (8) is excellent. Players are graded on the 5 tools of baseball, which are hitting ability [average], hitting for power [ability to drive the ball], running speed, arm strength, and fielding.

The first two days we worked collectively to generate scouting reports and then from Wednesday on we were pretty much on our own. The typical day consisted of morning meetings; attendance at games in the afternoon, report writing, dinner, and then back for a one on one with your instructor to review your reports. Most days included a reading homework assignment that we were responsible for knowing the next morning. Week one also included an inspirational talk from Mr. Don Pries, encouraging us to strive for excellence and go after your dreams. He also attended a game with us later that afternoon and I had a chance to speak with him briefly that evening about his time working in the Baltimore Orioles organization. At the end of week one, we received a "break" on Sunday, with a meeting in the morning, and the afternoon free. Most of the guys did laundry and watched some football games.

The following week things started to pick-up and we were urged to step it up as a group by Frank Marcos. We continued forward with the usual routine of morning and afternoon meetings, watching games, and report writing. We got a chance to see a couple of the Arizona Fall League games, which is made up of mostly Double A, Triple AAA, and the top minor league prospects, who are a lot closer to making a major league roster. The Arizona Fall League is a step up from the majority of games we watched from the Fall Instructional league, mostly made of short-season, rookie-level, and recently-drafted players. In the second week we were also paid a visit from Kim Ng, who is the Senior Vice President of MLB's Baseball Operations. She shared with us some of her experiences throughout her career in baseball.

There is a saying that "good management is not always noticed, but bad management is always." However, I like to land on the other side and recognize and appreciate when something is well put together. The Major League Scouting Bureau's Scouting Development Program was everything I expected it to be and more. My goal was to get better every day and learn as much as possible. Also, not to over eat, because they fed us very well! We covered various topics such as scout code of conduct, what to look for in a player, formula for judgment and organizing your territory, to name a few. One of the most important things was the talk regarding the importance of integrity throughout the program. In the words of MLSB director, Frank Marcos "you only get one shot with integrity." This is a good character trait for a baseball scout, but an even better one for being a great person.

Looking back over the years, I never thought about being a scout until about four (4) years ago when I met two brothers at a baseball showcase in Virginia, Jay and Joel Matthews, both professional scouts. What caught my attention was that Jay and Joel were the first African-American scout I'd ever seen. From that point I started to inquire about how to obtain a scouting position and began to make some

phone calls. Resultantly, I was able to latch on with the Detroit Tigers and work with Mid-Atlantic Area Scout Bill Buck. He remembered me as a college player and offered me an opportunity to work with him. I've been very blessed to have some great opportunities in baseball. I remember my last out [in a game] in college baseball and thinking what's next. Through coaching, scouting, and working with some great people I've be able to stay involved with the game I love. The MLSB Scout Development Program, not only gave me a better foundation of scouting and more confidence, but an opportunity to create a relationship with some good people. I'm looking forward to seeing my fellow classmates accomplish great things in baseball and to my next challenge.

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