



*** * * PRESS RELEASE * * ***

**For Immediate Release
February 6, 2012**

**CAL RIPKEN, SR. FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH
THE MIRACLE LEAGUE OF NORTHAMPTON COUNTY**

*Miracle League Field to Provide Youth with Special Needs in the Greater Northampton County
Community Their Own Place to Play, Learn and Grow.*

Northampton County, PA – The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation, a nonprofit serving youth in communities across the United States, announced today the organization has developed a partnership with The Miracle League of Northampton County to help build a new baseball facility in Palmer Township, Northampton County, Pa. The field is specifically designed to meet the needs of children with physical and intellectual disabilities. For more than a decade, the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation has used baseball and softball-themed programs to meet the physical and emotional needs of children in need across the country. Today’s announcement of the new Miracle League Field will help to ensure that children of all abilities can experience the special magic that happens on the ball field.

The Miracle League of Northampton County field will be located at the Charles Chrin Community Center on Green Pond Road in Palmer Township. The new field, combined with interesting and fun programs will enable The Miracle League to attract and make a positive impact on the lives of special needs youth for the long term. The American Academy of Pediatrics published a report in 2008 that clearly states the benefit of physical activity on children with disabilities. The report states “The benefits of physical activity are universal for all children, including those with disabilities. The participation of children with disabilities in sports and recreational activities promotes inclusion, minimizes de-conditioning, optimizes physical functioning, and enhances overall well-being.”

The Miracle League Field will impact children and their families by providing the proper environment where children can play baseball and other sports and know that it was created with their needs in mind. For these children, team sports will provide opportunities for them to grow physically, socially and emotionally and allow them to build social skills through peer interaction.

The Ripken Foundation is partnering with The Miracle League of Northampton County based on a demonstrated community need and the extraordinary vision and support of the Miracle League Board of Directors. The organizations have secured approximately 50% of the funds required and will be campaigning over the next few months to secure the remaining funds necessary to complete the project.

“When we started the Foundation ten years ago, we wanted to help kids and pay tribute to our dad,” said Cal Ripken, Jr., Baseball 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 kids across the country. We now have a model that we are bringing to many other communities. I want to thank everyone who is helping to make this possible and we are thrilled that the children with special needs from Northampton County and beyond will benefit from this wonderful field.”

Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation Vice President Chuck Brady added, “This is a wonderful day for the kids of Northampton County. The commitment of the Ripken family and our dedicated board of directors and staff helped make this happen. Thank you to the many generous donors and partners as well as the entire Miracle League Board of Directors for their unwavering support.”

"Building this field while incorporating a partnership with The Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation makes perfect sense as we create this "Miracle" for our players and their families," states Richard Agretto, President, Miracle League of Northampton County. "We are extremely excited to forge ahead with our capital campaign project as we work collaboratively with this wonderful organization. The impact of being the first Miracle League program to form an association with the Ripken name is a privilege and a very positive step for us, as well as for the future growth and development of partnerships between the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation and Miracle League fields across the country."

Miracle League National Executive Director, Diane Alford says, “The Miracle League cannot change or cure the medical issues life has dealt children and adults with disabilities. What we can do is provide them with an opportunity to experience the joy and benefits that come from playing America’s favorite pastime - baseball. There are experiences that change the way we look at life, the way we pursue our dreams, and the way we live our lives. The Miracle League is one of these Experiences.”

This initiative is part of the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation’s national Youth Development Park initiative, which was developed to provide youth with positive places to play and learn. The goal is to develop 50 unique, multi-purpose, low maintenance fields, which will provide a cohesive recreational and educational experience for underserved young people across the United States. The first of the Youth Development Park was opened last December at the old Memorial Stadium site in Baltimore, Md.

About the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation

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, Sr., the Foundation works to create programs that positively impact disadvantaged youth through active community partnerships with America’s most successful youth service organizations. To learn more visit www.ripkenfoundation.org.

About the Miracle League of Northampton County

The Miracle League of Northampton County is a 501(3)(c) non-profit created solely to build and operate a Miracle League field in Northampton County, Pennsylvania to bring the joy of playing baseball to children and adults with disabilities. This field will be centrally located at the Charles Chrin Community Center complex in Palmer Township. The location is easily accessible for residents of Northampton County, Monroe County, upper Bucks County and Warren County, NJ. Also, the site was selected because the field will be part of recreational complex where children of all ability levels will be playing side by side with their siblings, friends and classmates in a truly integrated recreational facility. To learn more visit www.miracleleagueofnc.org.