

William Cohen

Summer Service Reflection

Last spring, I became involved in a nonprofit organization called *Homerun Hopefuls*. Their mission is to distribute baseball and other sporting equipment to underprivileged children in the Dominican Republic. The organization was started over ten years ago by Brett Kalikow who was then a 14 year old student at Riverdale School in the Bronx. He started the nonprofit after a family vacation to the DR. He loves baseball and decided to leave his resort to go play with local kids his age. After finding kids using milk cartons as gloves and sticks as bats, he decided to start *Homerun Hopefuls*.

Last May I organized a school wide collection drive for equipment. In July I sorted and packed boxes to prepare for my trip to the DR. This past August, I went to the Dominican Republic for five days with 8 other high school students and Brett Kalikow to hand deliver the equipment to needy communities across the island. This trip was a great experience for me as I was able to practice Spanish and play baseball with other kids my age. I learned that while we are from different places and backgrounds, I was still able to find common interests with these kids. Driving past impoverished communities genuinely made me feel lucky to be an American. It was great to feel like I was making a difference in somebody else's life. I also got to visit the

Major League Baseball Commissioner's office in Santo Domingo, DR.

