FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 6, 2008

CONTACT: Jess Heald
931-409-7585
playballusa@msn.com

Sebastian DiCasoli
561-254-7190
seb02d@yahoo.com

PLAY BALL USA BECOMES BATTERS UP USA AFTER RECORD YEAR

The non-profit organization for promoting participation in youth recreational ball programs has changed its name to Batters Up USA. "Our board of directors realized that there were too many other uses of the 'Play Ball' name and felt a change to a name that related more directly to the sports of baseball and softball would give a better identity to our organization and its mission," said Jess Heald, Batters Up USA executive director.

At the same time, Batters Up USA has announced a record year in supporting the start-up of new recreational ball programs. At the end of 2007 (the group's second year of operations), Batters Up USA had supported the creation of 16 new programs involving about 4,000 kids. As of this June 1, the organization has supported the start up of 19 more programs involving another 4,000 kids. This brings the total programs supported to 35 involving about 8,000 kids ages 6-13. These programs are now spread out nationwide in 18 different states.

"This year's results verify that our program of equipment grants to local organizations is a winning and cost-effective combination," Heald said. "A most rewarding result is that all the programs we helped start up in the previous two years have continued, with many of them growing in numbers of participants."

The secret to Batters Up USA's success, according to Heald, is taking the game to places where kids already are in an organized environment but where there's no baseball/softball activity.

"We focus on the summer community center programs run by local parks & rec departments, Boys & Girls Clubs, and YMCAs," Heald said. "Many no longer offer a baseball/softball activity, but most have a useable ball field. Additionally, we are focused on the millions of kids in after-school programs run by these same organizations.

Batters Up USA would like to recognize the following companies that made all this success possible with their equipment contributions: Diamond Sports, Louisville Slugger, Rawlings/Worth, Mizuno, Markwort Sports, and the non-profit organization Pitch In For Baseball. Finally, Batters Up USA also recently launched its membership drive to raise $75,000 to support even more anticipated growth in 2009. If you're interested in contributing, read on for contact information.

Batters Up USA is a non-profit 501c3 organization with a mission to promote healthy lifestyles for our nation's youth through participation in community recreational baseball and softball programs. For more information, contact Executive Director Jess Heald at (575) 758-8125 or (931) 409-7585 via phone, playballusa@msn.com via e-mail, or at www.battersupusa.org.