Here at the Cedar Rapids Kernels we pride ourselves on being more than a professional baseball club. We strive to support our community with in-kind donations, fundraising, player appearances and much more. “Take the Lead” was developed last year to encapsulate all the work we do off the field and to highlight our charitable arm, the Kernels Foundation. Today, “Take the Lead” has grown into a motto and has helped establish us as a community leader in Eastern Iowa.

This season we took our community efforts to a whole new level by starting new programs such as “Home Run for Hunger” and “Catch with a Cop”. We are excited to highlight those new programs while recapping the other programs fans have grown to love over the years. Thank you Kernels fans and the City of Cedar Rapids for another great baseball season!

Mission Statement

From the Front Office to the dugout, “Take the Lead” exemplifies how teamwork and collective efforts support and benefit the Cedar Rapids Corridor. The Kernels are committed to being the community beacon for education, social and recreation programs.
The Kernels Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to ensuring that all youth in Eastern Iowa have the opportunity to experience the thrills and life enhancing lessons that come from engaging in athletics and recreational activities.

Below is a breakdown of what The Kernels Foundation helped fund in 2017.

- **Funding Sporting Equipment**: $6,370
- **Educational**: $19,000
- **Local Athletic Complex Renovations**: $12,750
- **Ballpark Outings for Underprivileged Kids**: $2,975

**Total Amount Donated in 2017**: $41,095
Supporting the community with special appearances by Mr. Shucks or Kernels players is just one way we give back. The almost 150 visits in 2017 ranged from stops at elementary schools, senior homes, non-profit 5k’s and so much more!
The Al Smith League of Dreams is an instructional, non-competitive, coach-pitch league open to local 2nd and 3rd graders. With the help of Minor League Baseball, Perfect Game USA and Rawlings, we are able to provide about 125 kids of Cedar Rapids a free baseball program.

Many children in the program may not have the means to play baseball, while others are playing for the first time ever. Introducing the younger generation to the game of baseball keeps the game thriving in the Cedar Rapids area.
For the last 19 years we have visited hundreds of elementary schools across Eastern Iowa to promote the importance of reading during the summer. Hitting the books during this break helps improve their reading ability and makes the transition to the new school year a little easier. By the end of the 2017 Kernels Summer Reading Program, we saw some very impressive numbers from the young readers!

3,200 Participants
72% Increase from 2014

2,500 Kids
Completed Program

TOTAL MINUTES READ IN 2017
2,858,500

Kernels pitcher Hector Lujan made 14 assembly visits to schools while Mr. Shucks covered the remaining 49. Over 1,800 miles was traveled by Kernels staff between the months of April, May and June. Thank you to our presenting sponsor Toyota Financial for helping make this program a great success over the years!

63 School Assemblies
Promoted the Importance of Reading to 23,000 Kids
Nick Adenhart was a bright young pitcher who played for the Cedar Rapids Kernels in 2006, and was a rising star in the Los Angeles Angels organization. Only hours after Nick’s 2009 season debut on the mound for the Angels, a drunk driver tragically killed him on April 9, 2009 at age 22. Nick’s family continues to honor him with the awarding of two $1,000 scholarships in his memory. The Kernels Foundation is privileged to administer the scholarships on behalf of Nick’s family.

The Cedar Rapids Kernels and Kernels Foundation were pleased to select Nicole Toppin and Matt Condon as the winners of the 2017 Nick Adenhart Memorial Scholarships. They were recognized in an on-field ceremony before Kernels game on Sunday, July 9th. Nicole Toppin is a member of the Class of 2017 at Marion High School and plans on attending the University of Iowa and majoring in Business and Spanish. Matt Condon is a member of the Class of 2017 at Linn-Mar High School and plans on attending the University of Iowa and majoring in Business and Sports Management.
The Cedar Rapids Kernels partnered with the Cedar Rapids Police Department, Jane Boyd Community House and Kids on Course for a new Kernels youth program called “Catch with a Cop”.

The Cedar Rapids police officers made four stops at Jane Boyd Community House and Kids on Course University to connect with children on a more personal level by having a game of catch.

This program was created in hopes of developing a more positive relationship between the youth of Cedar Rapids and local law enforcement. Our goal is to bring a positive story to light and use the game of baseball as a way to introduce groups of people who normally would not meet otherwise.

Kernels players joined the CRPD in four stops over the summer to play catch with the kids. On August 20th, everybody was invited to attend a free Kernels game to play one more game of catch on the field alongside Kernels players before the game.

As part of the Promotional Seminar, Minor League Baseball nominated the Kernels and “Catch with a Cop” for a Golden Bobblehead in the category “Best Community Promotion or Event”.

Catch with a Cop
First Federal Credit Union and the Cedar Rapids Kernels created the “Home Run for Hunger” program, a collaborative initiative to support the Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (HACAP) Food Reservoir.

Working together, volunteer employees collected fresh food donations at the conclusion of each Cedar Rapids Downtown Farmers’ Market where items were then be donated to the HACAP Food Reservoir. Over the 8 Farmers’ Markets in the summer, 3,759 pounds of food was collected which is equal to 3,133 meals for local people struggling with food insecurity.

First Federal Credit Union and the Kernels were awarded “Best Partnership” by HACAP in November of 2017.
The Kernels fulfill many charitable donation requests over the course of a year that consist of silent auction items for organizations such as gift baskets, tickets and suites. Other in-stadium opportunities like tables on our concourse and special jersey auctions allow us to use our platform in the community to raise awareness about a specific cause.

Including donations made by the Kernels Foundation, the organization made a total contribution of $256,258 in 2017.
The mission of the Cedar Rapids Ball Club, Inc. is to provide affordable, fan-friendly, high-quality entertainment in a first-class facility. As a fiscally responsible organization, our employees and Board of Directors are dedicated to enhancing our relationships with area businesses, residents and visitors through professional baseball and other venues.