

For Immediate Release
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SABR's Negro Leagues Committee Awards Library Grants

The Negro Leagues Committee of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) has awarded \$1,000 library grants to S.D. Lee Middle School and West Lowndes Elementary School, both of Columbus, Mississippi. School libraries from across the country were invited to submit grant proposals centering on educating students about black baseball and American history.

S. D. Lee Middle school's project is "Step up to the Plate," a Black History Month program for all classes. It will include a web quest kickoff, a bookmark contest, a baseball card contest, read-aloud sessions, parent visitation day, poetry writing, and special guests. Lee Middle School's principal is Cindy Wamble; Jamie Davidson is the school librarian.

West Lowndes Elementary School's program is "Batter Up! Reader Up!," which will invite area high school and college baseball players to speak at the school. Other activities include the creation of the West Lowndes Elementary Baseball Hall of Fame (students must participate in the program to be eligible), a door decorating contest, read-aloud sessions, and activities in all classes such as writing a new verse to "Take Me out to the Ball Game" or finding batting averages for their favorite Negro League players. West Lowndes Elementary School's principal is Robert Sanders; Minnie Williams is the school librarian.

"We are thrilled that the Negro Leagues Committee has taken the lead in creating this grant program. It's a marvelous way for school libraries to enhance their students' reading and literacy skills while introducing them to a chapter of baseball history with which they may be unfamiliar," said John Zajc, SABR's Executive Director.

Larry Lester, co-chair of the Negro Leagues Committee, adds, "These libraries have taken a coordinated challenge to pursue knowledge by using the Negro Leagues as a vehicle to achieve higher learning. We also look forward to their students participating in our essay contest when they become high school seniors."

The Society for American Baseball Research is an international, member-driven organization whose mission is to foster the study of baseball, assist in maintaining the history of the game, facilitate the dissemination of baseball research, and stimulate interest in baseball. More information is available on SABR's website at: www.sabr.org.