

Hello, my name is Reid Ryan, and I'm the CEO of Ryan Sanders Baseball. I'm honored to be here today to discuss the positive impact that minor league baseball has had on communities across our country. Baseball has been a lifelong passion for me.

My father, Nolan Ryan, is Major League Baseball's all-time strikeout and no-hitter leader and a member of the National Baseball Hall of Fame. When I was born, he was pitching for the New York Mets, and as I grew up, our family spent time with the California Angels, Houston Astros, and Texas Rangers organizations.

After playing college baseball, I was fortunate enough to be drafted by the Texas Rangers and assigned to the Hudson Valley Renegades in Poughkeepsie, NY. That experience marked my very first minor league game. Having grown up around the big leagues, I was amazed by the fun, family-friendly environment that minor league baseball offered. I couldn't believe that this type of entertainment existed all over the country, and yet I had never experienced it until I became a player myself.

Over the next two years, I played in the New York-Penn League, the South Atlantic League, and the California League. Traveling across the country, I witnessed the same thing in every market—from the East Coast to the West Coast—families and communities coming together around the game of baseball. It wasn't just about the sport; it was about affordable family fun, community pride, and a sense of belonging.

When my playing career ended, I set my sights on becoming an owner of a minor league baseball team. In 1998, at just 26 years old, I discovered a Houston Astros AA club in Jackson, MS, that was playing in an aging ballpark and needed to be moved closer to Houston. I assembled a group, secured a loan, and purchased the ball club. Little did I know that my efforts would help spark a renaissance in the minor league baseball industry.

In 2000, we opened the Dell Diamond in Round Rock, TX, building a major league-quality stadium on a minor league scale. Since then, I have owned or operated several clubs across the country, including the Corpus Christi Hooks, the San Antonio Missions, and the Fayetteville Woodpeckers.

Along the way, I've also spent time in the major leagues, working with the league on various committees and serving as president of the Houston Astros. I share this to illustrate that I have seen the game from every angle, and I always return to my love of minor league baseball. There is something truly special about the fans and the communities we serve that makes our game a cherished part of Americana.

Minor league baseball is, at its core, a hyper-local small business. Our games are played for fans at the ballpark, not for those watching on TV. The fans, sponsors, and staff are all deeply involved in the local community, and the ballpark often becomes the "front porch" of these towns. It's a place where people watch baseball, but more importantly, where they connect with neighbors, friends, and loved ones.

Throughout my career, I've been fortunate to build new stadiums in four markets, and I am currently working on my fifth in San Antonio, TX. In every case, the local economy has benefited.

- In Round Rock, the ballpark spurred the development of restaurants, hotels, and businesses.
- In Corpus Christi, a water park, concert venue, and restaurant were developed next to the ballpark.
- In Fayetteville, NC, a hotel and downtown living spaces emerged adjacent to the stadium.

- In San Antonio, we are in the process of developing downtown living as part of our project.

In every instance, the ballpark has revitalized or spurred growth in the surrounding area.

One of my favorite sayings comes from former First Lady “Lady” Bird Johnson, derived from the Bible: “To whom much is given, much is expected.” That’s how I feel about my role in minor league baseball. I’ll close by saying that my goal has always been to leave the game and my community better than I found them. By investing in minor league baseball and the areas around our stadiums, we have improved the quality of life in our local communities and helped small businesses grow and thrive.

Thank you.

Reid Ryan