



ANGELS AT BAT



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



--Christian Spaay Photo

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Prepared by

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Letter from Leadership



Max Bobholz

Founder and President

When I first came up with the idea for Angels at Bat in 2012, it was just that -- an idea. It was a dream. When a 12 year old kid has a dream, do they really know what they are dreaming of? In hindsight, I sure didn't.

The one and only time I have been in a "green room" was before the 2018 CNN Heroes: All-Star Tribute Show. While there, surrounded by amazing people doing amazing things, one of the Heroes told me that he came up with his mission while "a few drinks in" at a bar. There are always obstacles that stand in the way of dreams becoming reality; we laughed at the fact that a common thread between us was simply not seeing those obstacles. For him, it required some adult beverages; for me, it was just natural for a naive kid. **Amazing things can happen when we don't see obstacles as the end of the road.**

More than 12 years after coming up with this idea, I am humbled by the fact that this dream has truly become a reality. I am incredibly grateful for the communities that have helped make it all happen. All of our supporters and partners have uniquely impacted my life in a positive way. You've helped me find great joy in growing baseball in African countries. We are committed to helping players, coaches, and emerging fans of all ages experience joy and motivation in baseball. I am excited for all that is to come!

Ethics Statement



As an organization, Angels at Bat seeks to grow baseball while maintaining unconditional respect, love, and dignity for our partners and supporters. We practice power-sharing, bidirectional relationships, and other principles of community engagement. We recognize that representations of African communities often fail to capture the diversity, history, beauty, and love present on the continent. We therefore make a dedicated effort to represent and work with our partners and equipment recipients in a thoughtful way. All persons, regardless of background or experiences, deserve to feel the joy inherent in baseball.

Angels at Bat Overview



What do we do?

By collecting new and lightly used baseball equipment within communities in the United States and distributing it to teams across Africa who need it, we aim to support baseball's growth on the continent.

In memory of ...

In memory of Coach TW, who encouraged all of his players to "just enjoy" baseball to its fullest extent and believed that each player was a valuable and cherished individual, we hand-write #20 on all of our donated balls.

Our Mission

Angels at Bat is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to support the growth of baseball in African communities, namely through equipment distribution. The game of baseball teaches players a variety of life skills and lessons that enable them to become more well-rounded individuals. We hope our distribution of "set-aside" equipment, along with our other efforts, encourage African players to pursue baseball and learn these valuable life skills and find the joy that so many have found in loving baseball.

Key Accomplishments

In 2024, we achieved some incredible milestones, making a lasting impact on the baseball community across Africa. One of our major accomplishments was the distribution of over 5,000 pieces of baseball equipment to 3 countries (including a first-time shipment to Cameroon), providing players and coaches with the equipment they struggle to get elsewhere. This support went hand-in-hand with a groundbreaking sponsorship of Kenya's first televised baseball game. We also launched our Ubuntu Fund Grant Program, distributing nearly \$3,000 in funding to support baseball activities across the continent, ensuring that more players could develop their skills and engage with the sport they love.

The organization made its 6th visit to Kenya in 2024, continuing its long-standing commitment to the region. We were able to welcome Paul Wagner and Mike Collins for their first visit to the region. In addition to the equipment distributions and grant funding, Angels at Bat sponsored more than a dozen competitions across Africa, directly impacting over 1,000 players, coaches, and fans. These events sparked enthusiasm and camaraderie among the baseball community, creating new opportunities for growth.

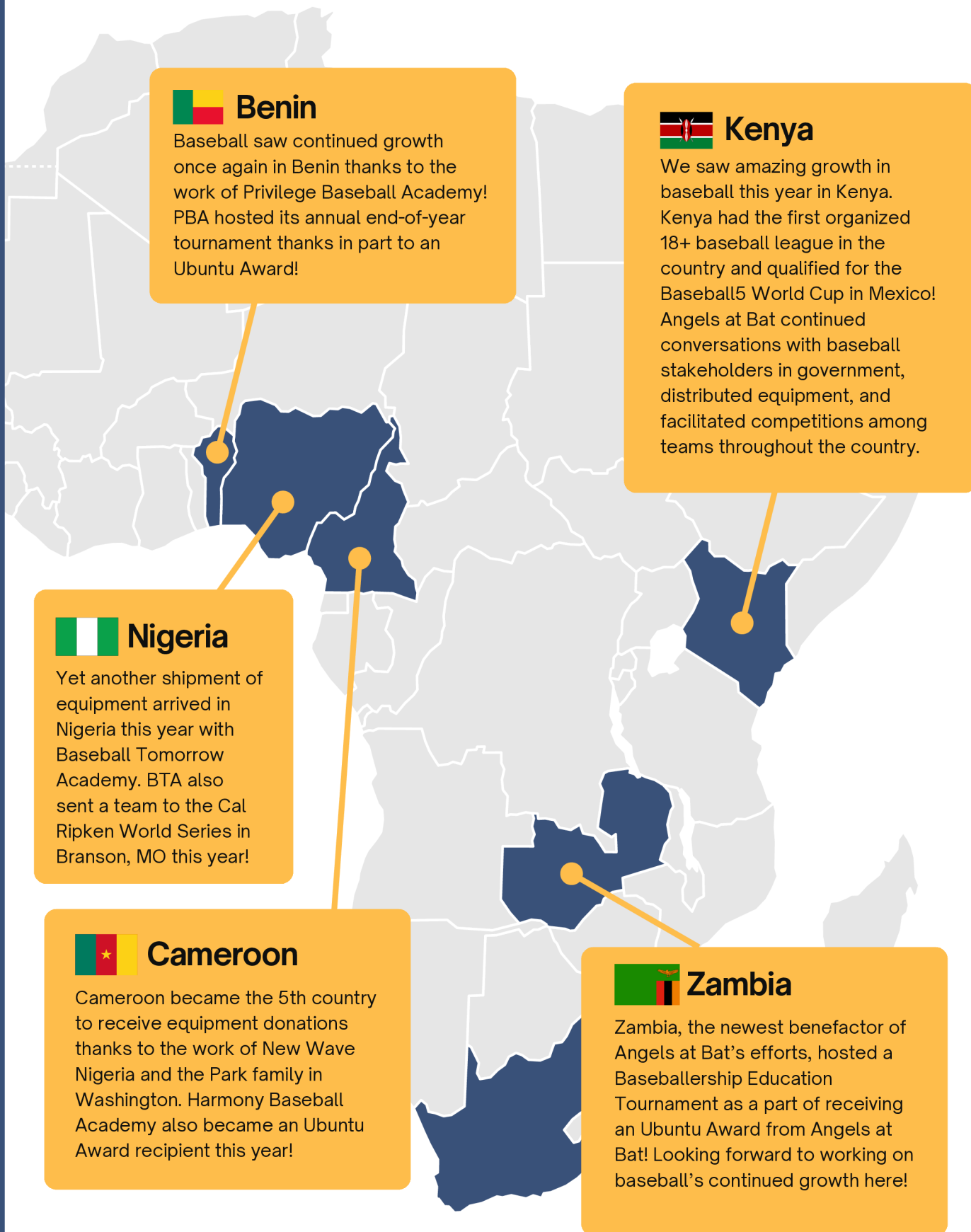


Angels at Bat took important steps toward improving representation by restructuring its Board of Directors. The addition of Felix Lifwakhala Kwachi and Justus Mwaka Musia to the Board was a key moment, bringing diverse perspectives and strengthening the organization's leadership. We have also entered exciting discussions to launch a baseball academy in Makueni County, complete with a training complex, which promises to be a game-changer for the future of baseball in the region. With so much accomplished and even more on the horizon, 2024 was a year of growth, connection, and lasting impact for Angels at Bat. As we reflect on an amazing 2024, we are excited for all that is to come in 2025!

2024 Equipment Distribution by the Numbers

→ Pieces of equipment shipped and distributed to 3 countries	5,000+
→ Estimated number of baseball players impacted	1,000+
→ Estimated pieces of equipment needing to be shipped	100,000
→ Fundraising goal to ship container full of baseball equipment	\$35,000

2024 Activities Map



Partnerships In Action

Not all activities and partnerships captured here.

IfWeBuildIt.org

The Angels at Bat x IfWeBuildIt partnership has been among our most productive! Since connecting, we have worked together to grow baseball in the Nairobi Metro Area. In September, Angels at Bat sponsored the first televised baseball game in Kenya as the IfWeBuildIt's Nairobi Baseball Community Series crowned Samurai United as its champions. As IfWeBuildIt constructs Nairobi's first baseball complex, we are eager to support their efforts to grow baseball through grassroots, community-based efforts. We are excited to support the pilot year of the Nairobi Little League in 2025.



--Christian Spaay Photo

Velocity Performance Training

As one of the premier baseball and softball training academies in Wisconsin, Velocity has proven to be a valuable partner in developing baseball and softball skills on the continent. Velocity founder, Mike Collins, joined us in May on our trip to Kenya. While there, Mike helped train coaches in skill development and baseball knowledge. We have also been working with Velocity to bring a talented pitcher from South Sudan to the United States to improve his skills. The Velocity team has been tremendously helpful in making baseball dreams come true!



OUR 2024 PARTNERS:



Leadership Spotlight



Felix Lifwakhala Kwachi

Director of Team Development

I am a 27 year old baseball coach and player from Kenya. I started playing baseball in high school from the year 2012. After my studies, I then proceeded to play for the Nairobi Giants, represented Kenya in the East Africa Baseball Competitions, played for Kongoni Network Superstars, and recently joined The Buffaloes Baseball Club. I am currently working with the Nairobi Little League as the Head Coach Kibagare Angels. My vision is to grow the sport in Africa and unite Baseball and softball federations in my community.

Year Started with Angels at Bat

2019



Justus Mwaka Musia

Director of Logistics

I am Justus Mwaka Musia, born and raised in Kenya. I met Max Bobholz back in 2016, as he introduced baseball to Kenya. As I look back I do have a big smile due to the amazing life impact baseball has been to the communities we work along with. Baseball is a new sport to Africa and for sure experience the growth I can attest to the world that baseball will be a sport every child will grow with. Baseball brings lots of joy, togetherness to me and I will live to play baseball. I want to THANK YOU all for being part of this life changing mission.

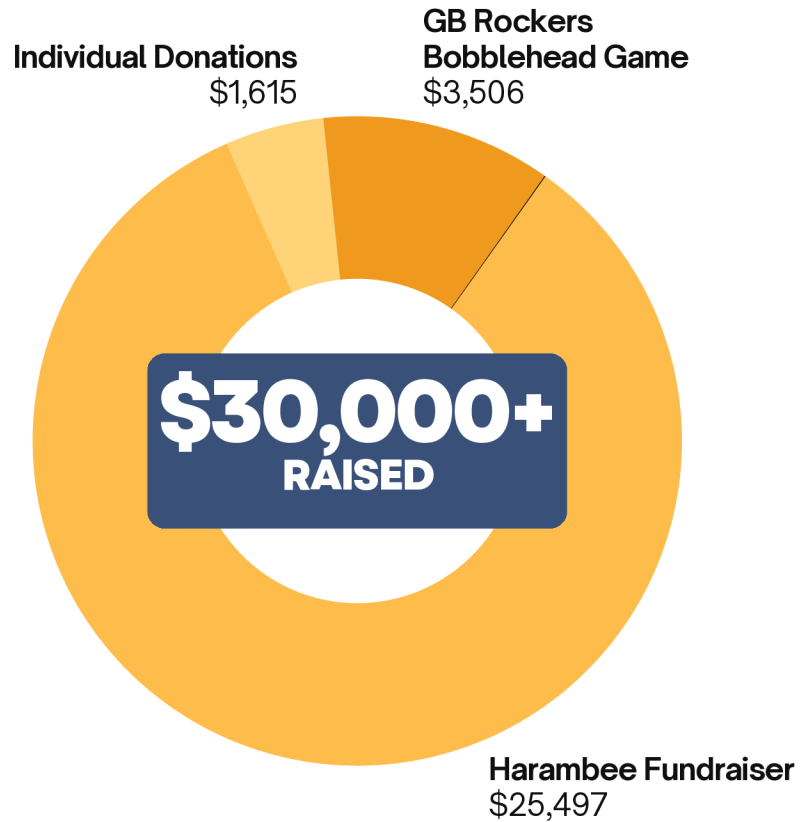
Year Started with Angels at Bat

2016



Fundraising Summary

We had our second straight year of amazing fundraising success in 2024. Raising more than \$30,000, we have been able to set ourselves up for continued efforts through 2026 already! Not bad for an all-volunteer team! While we accepted dozens of individual donations throughout the year, our two major fundraising events this year helped us reach our 2024 fundraising goals! Our first event took place on July 20th with the Green Bay Rockers of the Northwoods League. Thanks to the hundreds of people that came out to support, we raised \$3,500 and collected boxes upon boxes of equipment. Finally, we wrapped up 2024 in the best way possible – by hosting a Harambee. Translating to *pull together* in Swahili, our Harambee Fundraiser at the Black Sheep Wedding & Events Center was a raging success once again! We want to thank each and every one of our supporters for making our fundraising dreams come true!



Future Outlook

We are in prime position to support the growth of baseball, and we plan to do just that! We have had great conversations and discussions with our partners to do a variety of things in the years to come – we want to help turn those conversations into action! We need your help to make that happen.



Conversations with Governor Mutula Kilonzo Jr. (and staff) of Makeni County
–Christian Spaay Photo

Future Plan

We are going to continue to support the growth of baseball on the continent. We have learned (and will continue to learn) what ways we are best positioned to do this. We believe that equipment donation and distribution should be our main focus because for most of our partners, the only equipment they have access to is the equipment we get to them. We also have observed the impacts of our Ubuntu Fund program. We will always do our best to meet the needs of our partners in the ways that we can!

Upcoming Goals

Our first and most pressing goal is to send a shipping container full of new and lightly used baseball equipment to Kenya. To do this, we must raise about \$35,000 to cover all associated costs. This would satisfy the equipment needs for both our partners and thousands more youth on the continent. We also have plans to establish a baseball academy (including a field complex), expand our grant program, support full-time coaches, and much more.



The hills of Makueni County – home to the next baseball champions
--Christian Spaay Photo

Asante Sana

To our supporters and partners, we are grateful for the immense support we get through the Angels at Bat. We highly recognize and appreciate the various and different things we get. From equipment, sportswear, training kits, grant support and many more. For many years, baseball in Kenya has been struggling to be on the map. Some of the major challenges were the equipment, knowledge about the game and financial Aid. Through the love of the game, The Angels At Bat has met all these needs.

Happy to say that we've received quite a number of equipment regularly, which has led to interest and growth of the game. The Organization has also been so handy in making sure that we not only receive the equipment but also the general knowledge about the game. Regular coaches clinics have been organized and baseball information shared to both the experienced and new coaches. We are now able to organize for games, friendlies, clinics and baseball events. All these efforts have been made possible by the A@B and the support system affiliated to this great organization.

Your impact is felt and seen in Africa through the smiles and inspiring feedback we often receive. You are a true definition of the Swahili proverb that says *umoja ni nguvu* which translates to “together we are stronger”. It takes more than one person to win, it takes a team. On behalf of the African baseball family, I sincerely pass my gratitude to all efforts that makes this organization grow. Indeed baseball is growing in Africa.

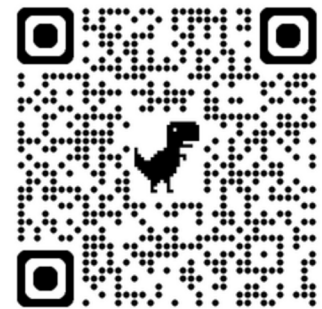


Felix Kwachi
Director of Team Development

2024 in Photos

We were blessed with yet another year of supporting baseball's growth in African communities. There is no better way to represent such growth than in the smiles, joy, and highlights of baseball players across the continent. All photos captured by Christian Spaay Photo.

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ANGELS AT BAT

Check out our documentary!

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