



CONTACT: Dawn Langfellow [dawn@minnesotascore.com](mailto:dawn@minnesotascore.com) (763) 537-3317

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 10, 2018

### **Little League Baseball team from Benin, West Africa Coming to Minnesota July 23, 2018**

The dream of coming to America and competing in the 14th Annual Robbinsdale Woodbat Baseball Tournament (Aug.2-5) will become reality for twelve Little League aged players and four coaches from Benin, West Africa.

Their trip is being funded by donations to Baseball in Benin, a non-profit organization founded in 2011 by two former Robbinsdale, Minn Little League coaches, Gary Tonsager and Wally Langfellow, who had a vision of bringing baseball to the small French-speaking country of Benin. Since 2011, the program has sent gently used baseball equipment, uniforms and shoes from Minnesota to the players in Benin. In 2016, a first-ever team from Benin travelled to Minnesota and competed in the Woodbat Tournament which exclusively benefits the Baseball in Benin program.

In May of this year, Tonsager and Langfellow traveled to Cotonou, Benin where they evaluated players, met with player's families and helped organize the team's trip to Minnesota. They also met with Beninese government officials and US Embassy personnel to help further awareness with the goal of baseball becoming a national sport in Benin.

Media are welcomed to cover their arrival, stay and/or any practices leading up to the tournament. Team Benin will arrive Monday, July 23 at 12:30 pm at the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport. Two weeks of activities include a Minnesota Twins game on July 30, Twins Baseball Camp on July 31 at Minnetonka High School and a trip to Mall of America on a date to be announced. There will also be a celebration of Benin's National Independence Day on Saturday, July 28 at Lakeview Terrace Park in Robbinsdale.

In addition to bringing America's pastime to Benin, the Baseball in Benin program is working to provide books and school supplies to the players and families involved in the program. Currently there are now over 400 players playing baseball throughout Benin.

*To donate to Baseball in Benin or sponsor a player go to [baseballinbenin.org](http://baseballinbenin.org). Equipment donations will be accepted during the tournament, played in Robbinsdale Aug. 2-5.*

**For more information please visit [baseballinbenin.org](http://baseballinbenin.org), or Baseball in Benin on Facebook**