

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.

*John Quincy Adams*

Leadership is one of the most important characteristics we promote at the baseball club. A leader does not have to be vocal; they can lead by their actions. Those that are vocal and send the right message can inspire others to do just about anything. Leadership takes form in all different shapes and sizes. It all begins with confidence; when one has confidence in themselves and isn't afraid to share, chemistry and success soon follow. Michael, Fiorello, one of the youngest Athlete of the Month recipients is constantly improving his own skills while sharing what he has learned with his peers.

About two years ago at the age of 7, Michael began coming to the BBC and hitting with his primary instructor, Bill Berman. Since then his presence has expanded to now involvement in hitting classes, strength and conditioning, the Fall Program and now the Bandits program. Michael as an 8 year old tried out for the 10u AAU Bandits this year. One point in the tryout Michael was hit by a baseball while hitting. Michael brushed himself off and got back in the box; in that one instance he showed me a lot about his desire and tenacity. Although my thought process at the time was that he was too young for our 10s this year, there is no doubt in my mind he will be a very valuable asset to our 10u Bandits next year.

During the Fall Ball Program this past year I watched first hand Michael working his tail off in our 7-9 year old group. He was exceptional, and one of the best in the group but that wasn't what impressed me. In a day where we are growing away from face to face communication, Michael felt no fear approaching other athletes, introducing himself, and helping them improve mechanics in various baseball drills. At such a young age he has proven to so many that he will be very successful in whatever lies in store for him later in life. When asked about Michael Fiorello, Coach Bill Berman stated, "Mike is mature beyond his 9 years. He gives more than he receives. I am not sure I have ever met a youngster who loves baseball as much as Mike. Not just the love of the game and the work, but the love of the brotherhood and family that baseball creates. He is a powerful example for others. He is a true class act in every way."

Included in Michael's work in baseball is also his participation in programs helping others. Michael volunteered his time Saturday mornings in the fall with the Superstars program helping children with disabilities play soccer. This past year for his 9th birthday, Michael and some of his fellow Sacred Heart peers decided to have a joint birthday party. However, instead of receiving gifts they asked for donations to Toys for Tots. At just 9 years old Michael has already learned valuable skills that will help him beyond sports.

Michael thank you for your leadership and your selfless character, it is a pleasure to see at such a young age.

Jim Joyce