



December 16, 2022

OYO Families and Supporters:

We appreciate the tremendous support and trust you and your family have offered our program. That's why for the past 48 years, our volunteers have always put you – our families – first. Collectively, we remain steadfast in our commitment to deliver you and your ballplayer an experience that will provide many lasting memories and valuable life lessons. Our league will pledge to continue to do that for this year, next year and for the next 48 years and beyond. And, nothing will ever shake our resolve to fulfill that commitment to you, the children of our league and the City of Lawrence.

Yet, one thing I have learned during the past several weeks is that life lessons are not just limited to our youth.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Oaklandon Youth Organization, I am writing to inform you that our program has purportedly been the victim of multiple acts of alleged theft and fraud based on transactions carried out by a full-time travel baseball coach, who has been relieved of all coaching and volunteer duties at OYO.

First, I want to be very explicit on several important matters as it relates to your league, my league, *our league*:

- At no time was our general operating account in jeopardy as this is limited to only one travel team's bank account
- There has been no breach of confidential information belonging to any OYO family
- All other travel teams have sound fiscal operations, records and supporting documentation
- We acted swiftly and firmly once we uncovered this fraudulent behavior

This former full-time travel baseball coach allegedly used the travel team's funds for a wide range of personal purchases in 2021 and 2022. This case has been investigated by the City of Lawrence Police Department and forwarded to the Prosecutor's office for further review and legal action. This has been a difficult situation for everyone involved. We have learned our own life lessons during this process, too. That's why we are committed to never allowing any misuse of league or travel team funds to ever repeat itself. As a result, the OYO Board will take the following actions:

- We will re-establish proper team account oversight with tighter controls ensuring robust checks and balances
- We will require more in-depth background checks for all current and future volunteers who have financial responsibilities on each travel team (both the head coach and the team treasurer/financial manager)
- And, we will work closely with the existing team to ensure they remain together, their team fees remain manageable and their bank account remains solvent despite this tragic misuse of funds

I realize this news may trigger a wide range of heartbreaking emotions from disbelief to anger. We share those with you. Since we consider you and your family an important part of the OYO family, we are obligated to share this difficult news with you. I firmly believe justice will prevail, and our league and travel teams will operate with more security than ever before. Yet, I know you may have questions. That's why I welcome you to call, text or email me with any questions you may have.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support. We are blessed to serve you and your ballplayer at OYO. See you in 2023 (and beyond)!

Sincerely,

Michael DeSanto
President, Board of Directors
Oaklandon Youth Organization
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