

**NEWS RELEASE  
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**New Charlemont Ball Field a Community Effort for a Community Resource**

The Academy at Charlemont's co-ed baseball teams are about to begin their second season – and their first on a home field.



Having acquired approximately 30 acres of hillside hay fields adjacent to its main campus in 2007, The Academy created access and leveled a playing field last summer. Through largely volunteer efforts, and the generous contributions of family and friends in memory of a recent and beloved alumnus, Zephyr Rapinchuk '10, the intention is to dedicate "Zephyr Field" later this spring. The JV team will play The Academy's first-ever home baseball game there on May 10.



Academy parents, neighbors, and friends are laying out and installing the infield and building dugouts. In an interesting re-use of materials, river silt that has been stockpiled at the neighboring Indian Plaza

since the aftermath of Hurricane Irene was trucked to the site of the field to create the infield. The silt was tested and analyzed and proved perfect for this purpose.

“The Academy hopes to make this field a community resource, particularly given the shortage of appropriately-sized playing fields in the area available for middle and high school-aged league play. For example, last summer there were three teams juggling practice times on the same field at Mohawk Trail Regional High School,” said Jesse Porter-Henry, Athletic Director at The Academy.



“Zephyr was a vibrant and joyful boy who was deeply passionate about baseball and life in general,” said his mother Tanya Rapinchuk. “It seems appropriate to honor him and his spirit of generosity by donating monies from his memorial fund to build a baseball field for the whole community to use at the school he loved so much. Zephyr would be amazed and so pleased to see the community rallying together around this field.”

His father Kamal Souccar noted “Zephyr often remarked on this need and lobbied long and hard for an Academy at Charlemont baseball team during his six years at the school.” In the words of Zephyr himself, “Nothing is more important than your happiness and your ability to positively affect the lives of those around you. Everything else is trivial.”

In honor of Zephyr and his extraordinary spirit, the broad community has been instrumental in helping to create a playable field for this season. In addition to time and expertise donated by Academy families led by parents Tom Shaw and Kamal Souccar, The Academy is grateful for the generous assistance of the following: W.R. Hillman & Sons (Dick Hillman), ST&I Services (Mike Skalski), Mile Long Farm (Doug Dean), the Indian Plaza (Harold Roberts), West County Equipment Rental (Craig Sessions), Ava Hunkler, and Ladies Landscaping.



For more information about The Academy's baseball program, including how to help make Zephyr Field a reality, please contact Jesse Porter-Henry, Athletic Director, at [jporter@charlemont.org](mailto:jporter@charlemont.org) or Martha Tirk, Director of Development, at [mtitrk@charlemont.org](mailto:mtitrk@charlemont.org).

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