

Straight Talk Newsletter  
SmilesLEAGUE All-Star Game Article

It is something most kids only dream about, to get the chance to play in a major league ballpark. But for thirty-two graduating senior baseball players, that dream became a reality. These thirty-two local St. Louis players had the opportunity to play where some of baseball's all-time greats play, at Busch Stadium for *Delta Dental's SmilesLEAGUE Coaches' Choice High School All-Star Game* that was held on June 27. The All-Star lineup featured players from public schools throughout St. Louis City and St. Louis County.

Each of Delta Dental's *SmilesLEAGUE* all-star athletes was selected by their school's coaching staff and randomly combined to form two teams, the "All-Star Blue Team" and the "All-Star Green Team." The two teams were coached by former St. Louis Cardinals players, third baseman Scott Cooper and outfielder Kerry Robinson, who are both St. Louis natives.

Before the All-Star game began, Delta Dental hosted a homerun derby competition. The derby competitors were selected by Cooper and Robinson based on their 2011 high school baseball season statistics. The players were pitched to by former Cardinals pitcher Jason Simontacchi. Lucas Mueller from Parkway Central was awarded the trophy for first place in the homerun derby. Pitcher Logan Hershenow from Parkway West was selected as the most valuable player for the All-Star game.

Tickets for the game were sold in the weeks prior to the game through high school coaches and also at Delta Dental's office located on Gravois Road in St. Louis. All ticket proceeds and donations went to benefit Cardinals Care, Give Kids A Smile and the Delta Dental Health Theater.

The *SmilesLEAGUE Coaches' Choice High School All-Star Game* helped to further Delta Dental's mission of improving oral health and overall health among area youth. The proceeds from this game will go a long way towards helping those with a lack of education and treatment for oral health.

"Some may wonder why the state's leading dental benefits company hosted a sporting event of this kind," said David Haynes, president and CEO of Delta Dental. "We at Delta Dental feel it is our social responsibility to help influence and inspire our youth to establish healthy life habits early on. We believe that our partnership with the St. Louis Cardinals, area high schools and St. Louis all-star athletes was a great way to call attention to the importance of healthy habits among high schoolers and the community in general."