



Pat O'Conner, President & CEO

Pat O'Conner has spent 34 years in professional baseball, including the last 24 in the Minor League Baseball (MiLB) office. He joined the Minor League Baseball staff in May 1993 as Chief Operating Officer and added the title of Vice President, Administration, in December 1995. Pat was elected the 11th president of Minor League Baseball in December 2007. He was re-elected for a third term in December 2015.

Since arriving at the Minor League Baseball headquarters, O'Conner has overseen a period of unprecedented increases in revenue and franchise values. Minor League Baseball set new attendance records for five consecutive years from 2004-08, has attracted over 41 million fans in each of the last 12 seasons (2005-16) and drew over 42 million fans in 2014 and 2015. In 2008, Minor League Baseball topped the 43 million mark for the first time since the organization was founded in 1901.

O'Conner is credited with negotiating three successive Professional Baseball Agreements with Major League Baseball on behalf of Minor League Baseball, the latest of which runs through the 2020 season. These agreements define the relationship between Major League Baseball and Minor League Baseball and have framed the modern-era structure for Minor League Baseball throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and Latin America, while creating a healthy financial environment for all clubs in the association.

His achievements with Minor League Baseball also include developing, administering and overseeing the operation of the Professional Baseball Umpire Corporation (PBOC), now known as Minor League Baseball Umpire Development. O'Conner also negotiated collective bargaining agreements with the Association of Minor League Umpires (AMLU) and oversaw two negotiations that resulted in a five-year agreements (first one was through 2016, the second one goes through 2021). O'Conner also helped to end a 67-day Minor League umpires' strike which lasted from April 6 to June 12, 2006.

He has successfully led efforts to realign Minor League Baseball leagues in a manner to capitalize on geography and effectively address Major League Baseball and Minor League Baseball needs, including the realignment of the Advanced Class-A level following the 2016 season. Additionally, Pat brought together Minor League Baseball clubs in packaging digital rights, entering into an agreement with Major League Baseball Advanced Media (MLBAM) in a landmark Operating Agreement between the organizations in December 2008.

Under Pat's guidance, Minor League Baseball announced a first-ever diversity initiative in 2009, whereby it executes programs aimed at diversifying the ownership, executive and staff personnel, fan base and business-to-business relationships within the industry. In an effort to be more inclusive, O'Conner also embarked on a series of steps to introduce Minor League Baseball as an investment, career, entertainment and business option. O'Conner developed a speakers' series at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) as a means of educating and informing young people on the opportunities within Minor League Baseball, as well as practicum and internship experience opportunities for minority college students interested in a sports administration career.

As a result of his diversity initiative and efforts, Pat was named the recipient of the third annual Allan H. (Bud) Selig Mentoring Award in 2010. The award is presented annually to a person in athletics administration who has been at the forefront in creating equal opportunities for minorities in the field of athletics. The award is presented by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA), which founded the John McLendon Scholarship Awards program and the John McLendon Foundation. Each year, the McLendon Foundation Steering Committee, comprised of the 15 minority Division I-A athletics directors, selects the winner. The award was established in 2007 and is named in honor of then Major League Baseball Commissioner Allan H. (Bud) Selig.

In 2012, Pat was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the United Athletes Foundation (UAF) for his work in making a difference in the lives of others and his longstanding commitment to communities around the country. The UAF is a non-profit organization whose mission is to leverage the celebrity status of professional athletes to impact positive change in their communities. Reggie Howard, who played cornerback for seven seasons in the NFL with Carolina, Miami and New Orleans, founded UAF in 2008 and serves as its President & Executive Director.

At the 2012 Baseball Winter Meetings, O'Conner introduced Project Brand: 160 Teams, One Brand, an industry-wide marketing program created to promote its model of affordable, family-friendly entertainment in order to attract major corporate sponsors to Minor League Baseball. O'Conner is credited with developing Minor League Baseball's "Green Team" initiative to make Minor League Baseball teams and stadiums more eco-friendly and cost effective.

In 2009, during O'Conner's first term as President, Minor League Baseball purchased a new office complex in north St. Petersburg, Florida. The four-building campus has 18,000 square feet of office space for over 50 employees.

Pat began his baseball career as Administrative Assistant with the Vero Beach Dodgers (Florida State League) in 1981. He then spent the 1982 season as General Manager of the Greenwood Pirates (South Atlantic League) and followed that stint with two seasons as Assistant General Manager of the Beaumont Golden Gators (Texas League).

After 18 months as Director of Athletic Marketing and Promotion for Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas, O'Conner returned to baseball in November 1986. At that time, he became head of Florida Operations for the Houston Astros and served as General Manager of the Osceola Astros of the Florida State League from 1986-1993. Pat was named the Florida State League Executive of the Year in 1988, as Osceola posted the best record in the league at 83-54.

A native of Grove City, Ohio, O'Conner received a degree in economics and finance from Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, and a master's in Sports Administration from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio.

Pat received the 1997 Distinguished Alumni Award from the Ohio University Sports Administration Program and the 2005 College of Health & Human Services Award of Distinction from Ohio University. He was inducted into the South Atlantic League Hall of Fame in 2000, received the Friends of Baseball Chapel Award in 2005 and was inducted into the Florida State League Hall of Fame in 2014.