

## Oneonta Man Receives SUNY Delhi Merit Award

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By Patricia Breakey, Delhi News Bureau

DELHI \_ The founder of an international baseball program that delivers new and gently worn equipment to youths in Latin American countries has been named one of the 2008 SUNY Delhi Alumni Association's Alumnus of Merit award winners.

Stephen Pindar, of Oneonta, will be presented with the award during alumni weekend in June. The other award recipients are Michael O'Dea, of Carmel, Ind., who graduated in 1967, and Ron Catella, of Littleton, Mass., a class of 1958 graduated who was named the winner of the Distinguished Alumnus award.

Pindar was honored in part for his work with the State University College of Technology at Delhi students through his Roberto's Kids program, Kimberly MacLeod, college spokeswoman, said Friday.

Pindar, a 1974 graduate of SUNY Delhi, said the award was totally unexpected.

"I was very surprised," Pindar said Friday. "I knew nothing about it, so I was shocked when I received the letter.

"I'm humbled and honored," Pindar added.

Pindar said he founded Roberto's Kids in 2006, but it grew out of a smaller effort he had begun previously. Roberto's Kids now operates in 26 states and three Canadian provinces.

He said the program builds community and opportunity and also bridges the gap between cultures. Individuals, groups, organizations that are running collection projects are able to nurture their own passion for helping others while being a part of the greater good.

Pindar is a member of the executive management team for Cooperstown Baseball World, a national youth baseball tournament owned and operated by Eddie Einhorn, Chicago White Sox vice president.

Pindar is also a member of the Board of Trustees of The Dominican Republic Sports and Education Academy, a non-profit organization that is designed to provide young Dominican athletes the opportunity to develop their own natural athletic abilities in a structured and educational environment.

Pindar said he and his wife, Lisa, and their four children divide their time between New York and the Dominican Republic.

Lisa Pindar said she was "certainly proud of her husband and his focus on a sense of community and social responsibility." Pindar is commissioner on the city of Oneonta Parks and Recreation Commission and a former Oneonta Common Council alderman.

He is a founding member of The Lord's Table, a community feeding program that provides socialization and a hot meal to the community five days a week. He is also a former member of the Board of Directors of the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York and has stayed connected to the organization as a member of the Hunger Prevention & Nutrition Assistance Program Grant review board.

A former member of Opportunities for Otsego's Board of Directors and the Otsego County Coordinating Council on Homelessness, Pindar was a part of the initiative for the 16 bed homeless shelter in Oneonta and supervised the program management and service provision for the first two years.

Pindar works from home in international business consulting and development and VolunTourism.

MacLeod said the Alumnus Awards of Merit are bestowed to people who have been successful and exhibit heroism and volunteerism.