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Updated: June 13, 2006, 8:48 AM ET

'Roberto's Kids' honor Clemente by sharing equipment

Associated Press

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. -- More than three decades after Roberto Clemente died trying to bring aid to others, an effort to help Latin American children has been launched in his name.

The family of the late Hall of Famer and the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum have created "Roberto's Kids" to collect new and lightly used baseball equipment for delivery to children in Latin America.

While the primary beneficiaries of the program will be in Clemente's native Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, organizers hope to reach youngsters in Venezuela, Mexico and other Latin American countries.

The goal of Roberto's Kids is to continue the charitable work of Steve Pindar and Steve Tremitiere. Each has collected tons of equipment for children in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico in recent years.

"The goal of Roberto's Kids is to collect and distribute equipment from baseball leagues, charitable organizations, individuals or retailers in the United States and Canada and provide that equipment to those in Latin American countries where baseball is loved and played with passion," Hall of Fame president Dale Petroskey said in a statement.

Pindar started the Baseball Equipment Project in 1999 in the Dominican Republic with a single donation from the Oneonta Little League. In 2005, his family collected five tons of equipment for Dominican children from organizations across the country.

Tremitiere has collected tons of equipment from eastern Pennsylvania and central New Jersey for the Roberto Clemente Sports City Complex and other organizations in Puerto Rico.

Clemente, a 12-time All-Star who had 3,000 hits for the Pittsburgh Pirates, died in 1972 at age 38 in a plane crash. He was taking relief supplies to victims of a Nicaraguan earthquake.

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