



# RETURNING THE SERVE

UNITED STATES TENNIS ASSOCIATION OUTREACH TO MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS, VETERANS AND FAMILIES

## USTA Advocates Visit Pentagon during Advocacy Days in Washington, DC



Admiral James A. Winnefeld who serves as the ninth Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff addresses the USTA. In this capacity, he is a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the nation's second highest-ranking military officer.

On Friday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, a group of more than 40 USTA representatives visited the Pentagon as

part of the USTA's Advocacy Days in Washington, DC. The officers of the USTA Board of Directors met privately with Vice Admiral Debbink, Chief of Naval Reserves and other senior military leaders. Later, the entire group was greeted by Admiral Winnefeld, Vice Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Admiral Winnefeld spoke to the larger USTA delegation to express his thanks for the USTA's ongoing efforts to support members of the Military, Veterans, Wounded Warriors and their families. Af-

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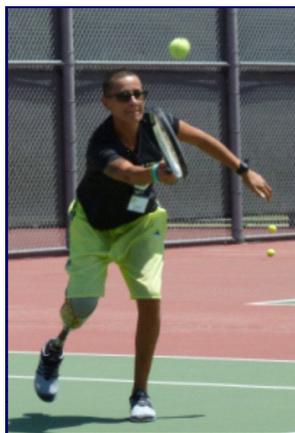
## First National Tennis Camp for Injured Service Members and Veterans Held in San Diego

Taking place May 15 - 18 at the Balboa Tennis Club in San Diego, this camp was the first national military tennis camp for ill, injured, and combat wounded service members and veterans from across the country. It was an outgrowth of the tennis therapy program being run with Naval Medical Center San Diego since 2009, which has served over 300 such personnel during twice-monthly tennis therapy clinics. The camp was an attempt to reach those both inside and outside the San Diego area, and establishes

a template for other programs. Over 40 ill, injured and combat wounded service members and veterans participated in the 4 day camp. It was a diverse group which included 24 Veterans, 18 Active Duty, and Reservists from all the military branches. Some were on the battlefield of Afghanistan as recently as a few months ago, and a few were Vietnam Veterans. They ranged in age from 20 to over 60, and had a wide variety of injuries, from double ampu-

tees to those wounds which are invisible. They were from 17 states, as far away as Maine, Florida and Hawaii. Through grants and in-kind donations from the U.S. Olympic Committee/Veterans Administration, USTA Sections, the Challenged Athletes Foundation, and several dozen local community service organizations, restaurants, and individual donors, "we were able to cover all airfare, hotel costs, meals, and local transportation for the participants and

their guests" stated Steve Kappes, the camp's organizer and President of the San Diego District Tennis Association. Planning is already underway for next year's event.



# USTA Mid-Atlantic Hires Veteran Intern

Alex Schneider joined the USTA Mid-Atlantic Section as an intern for the summer of 2012. Originally from Miami, Fl., Schneider has been a long-time resident of Great Falls, Va., and a lifelong athlete. Working with the various department managers to help execute their summer events and programs, he plans on learning how the governing body of tennis in the United States functions. When USTA/Mid-Atlantic Section was interviewing interns for their summer internship program it was a no-brainer to hire Alex. "Alex's military experience made him stand out from all the other

applicants," said Executive Director, Rod Dulany. "Alex needed this internship to help him graduate and we were happy to give him this opportunity. We are proud to have him on staff and hopefully we can continue to hire former military personnel in the future." Schneider joined



the United States Marine Corps in 2005 and served as a machine gun squad leader in 2nd Battalion 2nd Marine Regiment. He deployed with the 26th MEU in 2007 serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. While overseas, Schneider trained the Jordanian, Kenyan, and Qatari armies in basic infantry tactics. Schneider is now utilizing the Post 9/11 GI Bill at George Mason University and is scheduled to graduate in the fall with a degree in Sports Management.

## USTA Supports Tennis Therapy Clinics for Injured Service Members

Working with Warrior Transition Commands and Physical and Occupational Therapists at Warrior Transition Units/Battalions, the USTA had a busy 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter offering various Wounded Warrior tennis therapy clinics to

injured service members. We also participated in the first ever USMC Wounded Warrior Family Games.

The Warrior Transition Battalion at Ft. Campbell, KY, home of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division kicked off a tennis therapy program led by USTA



Patients and volunteers enjoy social time over lunch after the clinic kick off at Ft. Campbell, KY for the Warrior Transition Battalion.

National coaches, USTA Kentucky volunteers and staff, and local volunteers from the Pennyrile Tennis Association in Hopkinsville, KY. The USTA treated the soldiers to a two hour clinic, lunch, and USTA SWAG. The Ft. Campbell program will be held twice per week with the help of local USTA tennis professionals and volunteers.

The first tennis therapy clinic for patients at Walter Reed National Medical Center - Bethesda kicked off in June. Regular sessions will begin in the fall. The USTA Facility Assistance Department is also working with the facility staff at Walter Reed to develop a

family friendly tennis facility for patients and their families scheduled to open in spring 2013. The USTA will develop engineered plans for the facility and donate \$50,000 toward its construction. This fall,

the Montgomery County Tennis Association will begin fundraising for the remainder of the funds needed to complete the facility. If you're interested in donating to this exciting project, please contact [military@usta.com](mailto:military@usta.com) for more information.

US Marine Corps patients took part in the first tennis therapy clinic

for wounded, ill, and injured Marines at Kaneohe Marine Corps Base this August.

The very first introductory clinic kicked off in June with a training organized by USTA nationally ranked Junior Wheelchair tennis player Shelby Baron. The session was so well received, a regular weekly session has begun at the

Wounded Warrior Battalion being spearheaded by USTA Hawaii staff and volunteers. In addition to the program at Kaneohe Marine Corps Base, the USTA participated in the first annual Wounded



It was high fives all around during the tennis clinic for wounded service members at Walter Reed National Medical Center.

Warrior Family Games held at Camp Pendleton, CA, 29 Palms, CA and Balboa Navy Medical Hospital in San Diego. To find out if there is a Warrior Transition Unit near you, contact [military@usta.com](mailto:military@usta.com) for help in starting a program.



Rehabilitating Marines enjoy tennis competition with family members at Twenty Nine Palms, CA compliments of USTA Southern California and volunteers from Morongo Valley Tennis Association.

# Emirates Airline US Open Series Honors Military throughout Summer

The Emirates Airline US Open Series features eight U.S. tournaments, leading up to the 2012 US Open, the highest-attended annual sporting event in the world. This year they have one more thing in common—all eight recognized the many sacrifices of U.S. military service members, veterans and their families by honoring them at Military Appreciation Events across the country.



The Mercury Insurance Open in Carlsbad, Calif., held a player appearance and tennis exhibition aboard the USS MIDWAY Museum to kick off its "Celebrate Our Heroes" event, which took place on July 18. Professional tennis players such as Top 50 young Americans Christina McHale and Sloane Stephens played tennis with sailors from Naval Base Coronado and USS MIDWAY staff. In addition, between matches during the tournament, a military appreciation ceremony was held that included a flag unfurling by Marines, a Marine color guard and recognition of wounded warriors. Complimentary tickets to the day's matches were provided to military personnel, veterans and their family members. The Los Angeles Farmer's Classic offered unlimited complimentary tickets to all active-duty military, veterans and their families

during the week of the tournament as part of its military appreciation efforts. Military Appreciation Day was held the day of the final matches. The event also adopted a unit serving in Afghanistan through the USTA's "Adopt-A-Unit" program, collecting donations for care packages and hosting a letter writing campaign to support the deployed service members. On August 4, during the semi-final matches, the Citi Open in Washington, D.C., held a Military Appreciation Day. Five hundred tickets were distributed to military personnel and

their families courtesy of GEICO. More than 300 military family members signed up for a free tennis clinic hosted by USTA Mid-Atlantic prior to the day's matches. The ceremonies included a flag unfurling by local volunteers and retired military personnel, a US Army Chorus anthem singer and the presentation of colors by the Old Guard, the Army's official ceremonial unit and escort to the . Guest announcer Wayne Bryan, father of Olympic gold medalists and 11-time Grand Slam champions Bob and Mike Bryan, was on hand to welcome military families and intro-



duce special guests. In addition, the tournament was honored to have Lt. Reid Albano, currently at Walter Reed National Medical Center in Bethesda, MD, perform the ceremonial first serve. He was joined by incoming Army Warrior Transition Commander Brigadier General David J. Bishop, who performed the coin toss. The sponsor of the day's events, GEICO, also hosted a luxury suite and invited wounded service members and their families from Walter Reed to attend. The Emirates Airline

US Open Series is currently in its ninth season and features 10 tournaments (including two in Canada) that create a summer hard-court season leading up to the US Open. To learn more about the Emirates Airline US Open Series and about military appreciation events at Series events near you, visit [www.EmiratesUSOpenSeries.com](http://www.EmiratesUSOpenSeries.com). To learn more about USTA's military outreach programs, visit [usta.com/military](http://usta.com/military) or 'like' us on Facebook at [facebook.com/ustamilitaryoutreach](http://facebook.com/ustamilitaryoutreach) where stories about community outreach to military families is posted several times per week.

# TIP Veterans Day Play Days

This Veterans Day, park and recreation departments across the country will be teaming up with local Community Tennis Associations (CTA) to host Military Family Tennis Play Days across the country. The goal of the project is for communities to reach out to local military and veteran families and invite them to a complimentary community tennis play day. USTA's Tennis in the Parks National Chair, Mary Henderson stated "We are encouraging Parks and Recreation Departments to offer Play Days on, or around, Veterans Day (November 11) to thank the Veteran and Military families in their communities for their service to our country." Public parks have played a huge role in making tennis more accessible to children and

their families. In fact, 70% of tennis is played on public courts and tennis is the only traditional sport that has shown growth over the last eight years. The USTA is encouraging CTAs to invite military and veteran families to join the tennis community at a hosted Play Day on community courts. "They'll have fun, make new friends, and keep coming back for more!" says Henderson. The program is being modeled after



Military and Veteran families will be treated to Tennis Play Days by community tennis associations and park departments across the country.

USTA's 10 and Under Tennis initiative Play Days and expanded to include military family members of all ages. This same format has been used this summer during the US Open Series tournaments that featured Military Appreciation Days and hosted tennis clinics for military kids and families. Information on how to register your Play Day and contact military families in your area can be found at [www.usta.com/veteransday](http://www.usta.com/veteransday).

# WTT Junior Nationals Adopts A Unit

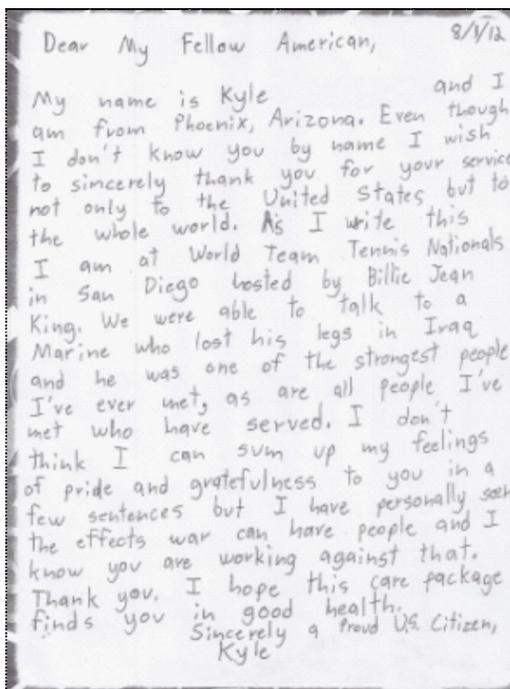


Tennis legend Billie Jean King helps junior players fill care packages for a unit deployed to Afghanistan at the World Team Tennis Junior National Championships in San Diego this August.

Approximately 120 junior tennis players from across the country attended the Billie Jean King World Team Tennis Junior National Tournament at the Barnes Tennis Center in San Diego on August 1, 2012. On August 2 the tournament hosted a military outreach presentation conducted by Steve Kappes, San Diego District Tennis Association President, and former Navy officer. The presentation was part of the educational component of the tournament. Approximately 120 junior tennis players from across the country ranging in age from 14-18 were there along with their coaches. All attended the presentation along with tennis legend Billie Jean King. The purpose of the presentation was to inform the players of the service and sacrifices made by military families, and ways the tennis community can support them. Naval Medical Center San Diego's Recreation Therapist, Marla Knox, partici-

ated in the discussion, and she explained the therapeutic benefits of tennis for the ill, injured, and wounded population. She brought one of her patients, a young combat-injured Marine (an ambulatory double amputee), who has been participating in the tennis therapy program at Balboa Tennis Club held bi-weekly for patients at Balboa Navy Medical Center. He spoke about how tennis has aided his recovery, and facilitated his participation in other sports and activities. He answered questions from the audience, including one from Billie Jean King. Mimi Kennell, Director of Junior Tennis for the Hawaii Section, was there as the coach of the Hawaii Junior WTT team. They have started a similar program that they are now running at the Kaneohe Marine Corps Air Station in Hawaii. Some of her juniors have been involved as volunteers. The USTA has similar programs running in several other states at military medi-

cal transition units, and is continuing to expand across the country. The juniors then transitioned into a discussion about the Adopt-A-Unit program. Prior to the start of the tournament, the organizers had informed the coaches about the program, and asked that the players bring items for the care packages, which they did. They held a packing party and the juniors wrote letters to their adopted unit - an Army unit in Afghanistan.



wrote letters to their adopted unit - an Army unit in Afghanistan. The program concluded with a reminder that the military population consists of more than just the active duty segment, and touched on some other ways the juniors could reach out to them. "Thank you to the USTA for providing this incredible opportunity for junior players to support our service men and women overseas and our military families who live in our communities. I know that our adopted unit will be delighted to receive the portable tennis equipment and the care package from the junior players" stated Kathy Willette, Volunteer Coordinator. To learn more about how your organization can adopt a unit visit [usta.com/adoptaunit](http://usta.com/adoptaunit).

*Providing sustainable world-wide tennis support, training and programming options to America's Service Members, Families and Veterans*



UNITED STATES TENNIS ASSOCIATION

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