

United States Tennis Association
2014 Grants Program
Althea Gibson Leadership Grant
August 25, 1927 – September 28, 2003
Athlete, Pioneer, Legend

About Althea Gibson

Althea Gibson was the daughter of sharecroppers who was born in South Carolina, and raised in Harlem, NY. A child who lived on welfare, Gibson ran away from home frequently. Despite her troubled youth, she still managed to excel in athletics. Gibson exceeded normal expectations in golf, basketball, tennis, horsemanship, paddle tennis and tennis. Gibson even toured with the Harlem Globetrotters as a basketball player. Dr. Walter “Whirlwind” Johnson, a Lynchburg, VA physician who was a pioneer in the black tennis community was instrumental in her tennis training.

Gibson won the first of 10 consecutive national championships run by the American Tennis Association in 1947. This was the only American tennis tournament circuit that would allow Gibson to play, since the USTA did not allow people of color in any sanctioned events at that time. In 1953, she graduated from Florida A&M, an opportunity provided by tennis and basketball scholarships. She then moved to Missouri to become an athletic instructor at a local university.

In 1956 Gibson won her first Grand Slam title, the Doubles Championships at the French Open. Her partner was a Jewish Englishwoman, named Angela Buxton. The two faced mountains of discrimination and challenges while touring together: Buxton for her religion, and Gibson for her color. With this historic win, Gibson was then allowed to play in USTA events, called the USLTA, and all other Grand Slams. That same year the dynamic duo won the same title at Wimbledon. In 1957 she lost in the Australian Open finals, but won the Wimbledon and US Championships in singles, officially breaking the color barrier. In fact, Gibson won the singles title in 1957 and 1958 in both countries.

In her retirement, Gibson became a singer, appeared in a few motion pictures, she wrote her autobiography and was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame.

Gibson died in 2003 at the age of 76. She was honored on the Opening night of the 2007 US Open by the USTA, celebrating the 50th Anniversary of her win. She was also inducted in the Court of Champions. Gibson rose from a troubled childhood, overcame an impoverished upbringing, dedicated herself to excellence and succeeded in sport and in the classroom. She is a woman to be honored, remembered and admired. Althea Gibson: a woman who could have played the victim, but chose the positive pathway of hard work and determination to make her mark on tennis, and Americans of her era and yours.

The objectives of the **Althea Gibson Leadership Grant** are to:

1. Honor the memory, life, and achievements of this exceptional pioneer who paved the way for millions who followed.
2. Reward players who work to excel in leading others on and off the court.
3. Widen the net of opportunities to young diverse players who aspire to excellence in competitive tennis.
4. Assure the careful nurturing of young players who may be candidates for USTA Player Development Programs, and may have the ability to achieve national or international rankings.
5. Demonstrate the USTA resolve and commitment to multicultural participation in tennis.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Althea Gibson Leadership Grant

Grant funding is based on a number of factors including the success level of the player in the previous year (e.g., end of the year USTA ranking list/performance) and **recommendations/commentary about the individual's team spirit and leadership qualities**. The grant funding is intended to be granted to junior player(s) aspiring to achieve national and/or international rankings. The recipient(s) should have a history of strong national tournament results. The recipient(s) must be actively training and competing in tournaments in the award year. **TWO GRANTS ARE AWARDED per year in the amount of \$2,500 each, for actual and necessary training expenses.***

GRANT REQUIREMENTS:

- For consideration the player must be:
 1. A United States Citizen
 2. of ethnic or racially diverse background
 3. Ranked in the **Top 100** at the national (i.e., USTA) level, in his/her age category, or player must have an ITF, ATP / WTA Ranking.
- 1 copy of **official high school transcript** (or home school transcript) must be attached to the application.
- Input from members of the USTA Player Development staff will be sought.
- Two letters of recommendation about the player's leadership ability are required.
- Players must be in high school between the ages of 14-18 years old.
- **A proposed 2014 tournament and training schedule must be submitted along with the grant application.**
- Brief essay by the player stating how they embody the tenacity, courage, and leadership qualities demonstrated by Althea Gibson.

I hereby certify that the information submitted above is correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that all information is subject to verification by the USTA Diversity & Inclusion Department as a condition of awarding funds.

Player's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent #1 Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent #2 Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please mail or fax application no later than January 17, 2014, to:
Terri Arnold-McKenzie
Coordinator
The USTA Office of Diversity & Inclusion
70 West Red Oak Lane, White Plains, NY 10604
914-697-2381 914-696-2051 (fax)
[**arnold@usta.com**](mailto:arnold@usta.com)

Please include a fax number and/or an email address to assist us in the application process. Email addresses shall not be used for any other purpose unless we receive consent from the applicant or from his/her legal guardian.

Decisions will be announced in March of 2014 via official letter and posted on the USTA web site:
www.usta.com/USTA/Home/AboutUs/AwardsandGrants.aspx

*Actual and necessary training expenses include, but are not limited to, developmental training, coaching, facility usage, equipment, apparel, supplies, comprehensive health insurance, travel, room and board.

USTA 2014 ALTHEA GIBSON LEADERSHIP GRANT

CONFIDENTIAL (To be completed by parents if under 18)

Last Name: _____ **First Name:** _____ **Age:** _____
Address: _____ **City:** _____ **ST:** _____ **Zip:** _____
Home Phone: (____) _____ **Total Dollar Amount Spent on Tennis in 2013: \$** _____
E-mail Address: _____ **Number of USTA National Tournaments Played in 2013:** _____
Date of Birth: _____ (MM/DD/YY) **USTA Section:** _____
Current Grade Point Average: _____ **ACT/ SAT Score:** _____
Male _____ **Female** _____

Race/Ethnicity (All persons who identify with more than one race should check each race they identify with):

African-American/Black (Not Hispanic or Latino): _____
Hispanic or Latino: _____
Asian (Not Hispanic or Latino): _____
Eurasian (Not Hispanic or Latino): _____
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian (Not Hispanic or Latino): _____
Native American or Alaska Native (Not Hispanic or Latino): _____
White (Not Hispanic or Latino): _____
Other (Please Specify): _____

Jr. Singles Ranking: 2013 Final National Ranking/Standing: _____ Age Group: _____
 2013 Final ITF Ranking/Standing: _____ Age Group: _____

ATP/ WTA: 2013 Current Ranking: _____ (as of what date?) _____

Parent/Legal Guardian: _____ **Home Phone:** _____
Home Address: _____ **Work Address:** _____
Work Phone: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian #2: _____ **Home Phone:** _____
Home Address: _____ **Work Address:** _____
Work Phone: _____

Personal Coach (if any): _____ **Academy:** _____
Phone: (____) _____ **Fax:** (____) _____ **Other:** (____) _____
Address: _____ **City:** _____ **ST:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Do you presently receive financial assistance for tennis from any other source, other than parents?

_____ Yes (if yes, please explain) _____ No

USTA 2014 ALTHEA GIBSON LEADERSHIP GRANT

I. ATTACHMENTS & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED*:

1. Please provide name(s) of coach (es) and/or tennis program and/or Program Director with whom you are currently working. Attach additional pages if necessary.
2. Please have your coach or Program Director describe the progress you have made since beginning your tennis participation with him or her. (Feel free to attach in a separate document)
3. Please describe your training regimen, including: hours of practice, drills, competitive play, hours and methods for conditioning, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary.
4. Please attach a proposed tournament and training schedule for 2014.
5. In a brief one page essay, please tell the USTA why you feel you embody the ideals, determination, and other qualities of Althea Gibson. (*Attach essay to this document.*)

USTA 2014 ALTHEA GIBSON LEADERSHIP GRANT

For students attending public or private high school

II. ATTACHMENTS REQUIRED*:

Please attach TWO (2) letters of recommendation commenting on your **leadership ability and team spirit** from any combination of the following:

- a. High school principal
- b. High school guidance counselor
- c. Part-time job employer
- d. City, county, or state elected official
- e. Religious leader
- f. High school teacher of a core academic class (gym and art/ music teachers are not included)
- g. A non-relative over the age of 18 who has known you for 4 years or more (please specify relationship)
- h. Tennis instructor (no more than one letter accepted from instructors/ coaches, so you must choose at least one more from this list)
- i. **APPLICATIONS WITHOUT TWO LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION WILL BE IMMEDIATELY DISQUALIFIED AND WILL NOT BE REVIEWED**

Please attach a copy of your high school transcript. (APPLICATIONS WITHOUT A COPY OF AN OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT WILL BE IMMEDIATELY DISQUALIFIED AND WILL NOT BE REVIEWED. Transcript copies must include school, school's address, school's phone number, official letterhead or emblem of the school, information key defining school's grading system)

For students who are home schooled:

III. ATTACHMENTS REQUIRED*:

Please attach TWO (2) letters of recommendation commenting on your **leadership ability and team spirit** from any combination of the following:

- a. Part-time job employer
- b. City, county, or state elected official
- c. Religious leader
- d. Community leader (non-relative)
- e. A non-relative over the age of 18 who has known you for 4 years or more (please specify relationship)
- f. Tennis instructor (no more than one letter accepted from instructors/ coaches, so you must choose at least one more from this list)

Please attach a copy of your home school transcript, including documentation of classes taken, certification of home school instructor, and any year end evaluations of student performance. (APPLICATIONS WITHOUT A COPY OF HOME SCHOOL DOCUMENTATION WILL BE IMMEDIATELY DISQUALIFIED AND WILL NOT BE REVIEWED.)