



# REACH OUT

NJTL Newsletter; Summer 2010 Issue

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ▶ Jul 15: Recreational Tennis Grant Application available on-line, visit [www.usta.com/grants](http://www.usta.com/grants) for more info
- ▶ Jul 19-25: Tennis Leadership Camp, Emory University, Atlanta, GA
- ▶ Aug 27-29: Arthur Ashe Essay Contest Weekend
- ▶ Aug 28: Arthur Ashe Kids Day, USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, Flushing, NY
- ▶ Sep 3-10: USTA Semi-Annual Meeting & Conference, New York, NY
- ▶ NJTL Kids Days (formerly Regional Rallies) Throughout Summer

## NJTL TAKES ON THE PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE

The USTA is deepening its relationship with the White House and Michelle Obama's Let's Move Campaign against childhood obesity by encouraging the NJTL network to adopt the Presidents' Challenge.



The President's Challenge is a physical activity challenge administered by the President's Council on Physical Fitness as a way to decrease the incidents of childhood obesity and related health issues. Kids must demonstrate 60 minutes of physical activity per day, 5 day per week, for 6 out of 8 weeks in order to receive a signed certificate from the President of the United States, Barack Obama.

Many NJTLs this summer have stepped up to achieve the President's Challenge. In Olympus US Open Series markets, we are making a special effort to engage NJTL youth and to recognize the kids on-court during the events.

Chapters in the following Olympus US Open Series markets have signed up and are working with their participants this summer to achieve the challenge:

The **more** chapters that take on the challenge, the bigger the contribution we can demonstrate to the budding partnership as our network continues to make a difference in the lives of young people across the country.

US Open Series Event	Location	NJTLs Participating in President's Challenge
Atlanta Tennis Championships	Atlanta, GA	Atlanta Youth Tennis Foundation
Bank of the West Classic	Palo Alto, CA	Youth Tennis Advantage
Farmers Classic	Los Angeles, CA	LA84 SCTA NJTL
Mercury Insurance Open	San Diego, CA	Youth Tennis San Diego
Legg Mason Tennis Classic	Washington, DC	Active Aces CREATE Southeast Tennis and Learning Center Tennis at Shiloh Washington Tennis & Education Foundation
Pilot Pen Tennis	New Haven, CT	New Haven Youth Tennis



NJTL campers in Denver, CO (Photo Credit: Garret Ellwood)

**Musanze, Rwanda, May 24, 2010** –Four years ago, Julie Ghrist moved from Iowa to Rwanda to start Art of Conservation (AoC), a non-governmental organization which provides intensive conservation education courses to school children near Volcanoes National Park. She also spent much of her free time getting children who live near her home in Musanze involved in the sport of tennis. "These children are my neighbors and were my first friends when I moved to Rwanda in 2006...." said Ghrist. "I saw within them a desire to participate in sports and to do more with their lives than get into trouble. Since then, I have seen them grow into talented tennis players and role models for their peers."

On Saturday, May 22, the AoC Children's Tennis Team, part of the USTA National Junior Tennis & Learning (NJTL) network, got the chance to show off their athletic skills and demonstrate good sportsmanship at the first annual Art of Conservation Children's Tennis Tournament.



Above : The Art of Conservation Children's Tennis Team

The NJTL is comprised of 11 young Rwandans from the Muhoza Sector in Musanze District. "This competition is culmination of four years of training and hard work by the AoC Children's Tennis Team and Antoine Musengimana, who has served as their coach and a father figure for the last two years," said Ghrist. The tennis program has been supported by Bunny Bruning and John Terpkosh of the USTA/ Missouri Valley- Iowa District, who have donated athletic equipment, and just recently granted AoC \$1,000 USD to rehabilitate the Musanze District tennis courts.

This was the AoC Team's first official tournament, which included five singles matches with players matched by age and skill level and one doubles match pairing the team's top four players. Fourteen- year old Moise "Habibo" Habineza won three matches, earning him the title of tournament champion. His ecstatic mother said, "I am so proud of Habibo, I know now that he can achieve great things in life."

Other winners included Emmanuel Twagirayesu, 12- to 13-year-old category, Valens "Baby" Muhawenimana, 9- to 11-year-old category, and Clementine Uwineza, 12- to 13-year-old girl's category.

#### About Art of Conservation

Art of Conservation, Inc., works in poor rural communities bordering Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda, teaching school-children and other community members about the importance of maintaining a healthy environment for both people and animals and instilling them with an understanding and respect for themselves, their peers, and the natural world. Art of Conservation approaches learning through a unique method, using visual, auditory, and performance arts to teach lessons and inspire creativity in its students. In partnership with other organizations which attend directly to the well-being of the Volcanoes National Park ecosystem and its resident mountain gorillas, Art of Conservation seeks to fill the education gap in the local communities through its activities. More information: [www.art-of-conservation.com](http://www.art-of-conservation.com)

#### ***DID YOU KNOW?***

*NJTL has two other honorary chapters on the African continent. Can you name them and the cities in which they are located?*

*(Answer on page 6)*

#### ***NJTL WELCOMES CHINA KIRK AS NATIONAL EDUCATION MANAGER***



Please join us in welcoming **China Kirk** to the staff of the USTA as the NJTL Education Manager in our Outreach & Advocacy department.

In this new role, China's responsibilities include managing the integration and growth of First Serve programming within the NJTL network by expanding the number of NJTL Chapters implementing First Serve programming.

Prior to joining the USTA, China was employed at the New York Junior Tennis League NJTL as a School Program Coordinator and most recently as their Director of Marketing, Private Funding and Communications. She holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Sciences from NYU and is currently enrolled in the Master of Nonprofit Administration Program at the University of Notre Dame.

China may be contacted at (914) 696-7088 or via email at [kirk@usta.com](mailto:kirk@usta.com).

## ***NJTL ACQUIRES EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS TO FIRST SERVE CURRICULUM***



Last year, the NJTL was rebranded as the USTA National Junior Tennis and Learning network to emphasize its commitment to develop the character of young people not only through tennis, but education as well.

In continuation of this commitment, the USTA has acquired all rights to First Serve, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, and its programs, including the First Serve Life Skills Curriculum™ and the First Serve National Student Athlete Competition. These programs will join the Arthur Ashe Essay Contest and Tennis Leadership Camp to help strengthen the NJTL menu of educational offerings and enhance the USTA's ability to build the brand and seek outside investment.

**The First Serve Life Skills Curriculum™** is a successful and effective method, utilizing tennis with the sole purpose of empowering youth with the skills, values and experience they need to be responsible and productive citizens.

**The National Student Athlete Competition** is an annual 12-month, point-based competition based on school report cards, tournament results and USTA Jr. Team Tennis participation. The top three point-earners in four different age and gender divisions earn college scholarships of up to \$5,000 per year.

Prior to the USTA's acquiring of First Serve, 16 NJTL chapters had been delivering First Serve programming. There are an additional 16 chapters in development, and in June 2010, the following 8 NJTLs were accepted into the First Serve program:

- "I Have a Dream Foundation of Boulder County, Boulder, CO
- Lobs & Lessons, Richmond, VA
- New Haven Youth Tennis, New Haven, CT
- New York Junior Tennis League Woodside, NY
- Southeast Tennis & Learning Center, Washington, DC
- Southern California Tennis Association, Los Angeles, CA
- Troy Chapter, Troy, AL
- Youth at Heart, Tulsa, OK

### ***INTERESTED IN BECOMING A NJTL FIRST SERVE CHAPTER?***

*The 2010-2011 application period for First Serve is now closed. The next application period will open in the spring of 2011.*

For more information about First Serve, please visit [www.firstserve.org](http://www.firstserve.org).

## ***NJTLs CONVENE AT FIRST SERVE ANNUAL MEETING***



l-r: Barry Ford, Erika Buchholz, Dan Limbago, Trey Buchholz, and Robert Flader

NJTL recently convened all 32 chapters currently involved in First Serve programming in Potomac, MD, June 2-4, 2010, for a three day Annual Meeting. The group established rules and regulations for the upcoming National Student Athlete Competition as well as received training on life skills delivery. This annual meeting was the first chance for all chapters to meet the 16 new Chapters In Development, and with USTA leadership, since the acquisition in late 2009.



The National Scholar Athlete Competition is one of the ways First Serve accomplishes its mission of creating educational and recreational programming that challenges and inspires underserved young people who are dedicated to succeed in life. This annual 12-month point-based competition based on school report cards, tournament results and USTA Jr Team Tennis participation.

Zina Garrison Academy, Houston, TX



The current competition began August 12, 2009 and ends August 11, 2010. Points are awarded for report card and tournament results with national rankings determined by points earned.

Using tennis as the vehicle, the number of tournaments played by the NSAC participants has more than doubled since the 2008/2009 competition and the number of matches won so far this year is 962, up from last year's total of 407.

A review of report cards shows passing grades are also up among the NSAC participants. Compared to 2008/2009 First Serve Scholar Athlete competitors, there are:

- ▶ 19% more A's in Math,
- ▶ 6% more A's in Science, and
- ▶ 11% more A's in Reading/Literary Arts

The top three point-earners in four different age and gender divisions will earn up to \$5,000 per year in college scholarships.

To follow the competition, visit [www.firstserve.org/rankings.html](http://www.firstserve.org/rankings.html)

## *GEOFFREY ARDOLINO JOINS OUTREACH & ADVOCACY*

Please join us in welcoming Geoffrey Ardolino as the Administrative Assistant in our Outreach & Advocacy department. In this role previously filled by Emily Sandor, his responsibilities include providing support in the areas of database and registration assistance for USTA/NJTL Chapters/Programs, assisting staff with coordination of events, activities and projects such as NJTL Tennis Leadership Camp, Arthur Ashe Essay Contest, NJTL Kids' Days and updating the NJTL website.

Prior to joining the Outreach & Advocacy department, Geoffrey worked as a temporary employee in the Membership department. He was also a volunteer at the 2009 US Open.

Geoffrey can be reached at (914) 696-7136 or via email at [ardolino@usta.com](mailto:ardolino@usta.com).



## **USTA AWARDS MORE THAN \$315,000 IN RECREATIONAL TENNIS GRANTS**

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y., May 25, 2010 –The USTA announced today that it is awarding more than \$315,000 in Recreational Tennis Grants to 38 non-profit organizations across the country. The USTA's Recreational Tennis Division has pooled financial resources to create a series of Program/Project Support grants and Community Partnership Investment awards. These will be distributed on a bi-annual basis to non-profits that are committed to increasing tennis participation, are well-established in their communities, support tennis programming and foster diversity among participants.

“The USTA is excited to invest more than \$315,000 in those organizations that believe tennis can be the vehicle to improve the quality of life for both children and adults,”



Recreational Tennis Grant recipient Highland Park Tennis Club

said Kurt Kamperman, Chief Executive, Community Tennis, USTA. “Not only do these organizations support their communities, they support the USTA by implementing local programming such as the QuickStart Tennis play format and Jr. Team Tennis. We are very pleased to have organizations that show such spirit and passion for tennis and education receive this honor and the funding to help grow their programs and the sport of tennis.”

### **NJTLs Receiving Program/Project Support Grants**

Apple Ridge Farm, Inc., Roanoke, VA  
Associated Recreation Council Tennis Center Advisory Council, Seattle, WA  
Atlanta Community Tennis Association, Atlanta, GA  
Capital Region Youth Tennis Foundation, Albany, NY  
Cardinal Sheehan Center, Bridgeport, CT  
Harlem Jr. Tennis and Education Program, New York, NY  
Highland Park Tennis Club, Monroeville, PA  
Inner City Tennis Clinics, Cleveland, OH  
Inner City Tennis Foundation, Minneapolis, MN  
MACH Academy, Inc., Augusta, GA  
Net Results Junior Tennis, Denver, CO  
Norwalk Grassroots Tennis Inc., Norwalk, CT  
Pilsen Junior Tennis Camp, Chicago, IL  
Prince George's Tennis & Education Foundation, Largo, MD  
QuickStart Tennis of Central Virginia, Inc., Charlottesville, VA  
Ricardo Flores Magon Academy, Inc., Westminster, CO  
Savannah Area Tennis Association, Inc., Savannah, GA  
Scuola Vita Nuova Charter School, Kansas City, MO  
Sioux Falls Tennis Association, Sioux Falls, SD  
Tennis Mania, Inc., Pueblo, CO  
Western Wake Tennis Association, Cary, NC  
Youth At Heart, Tulsa, OK

## **NINETEEN NJTL SCHOLAR ATHLETES TO RECEIVE USTA SERVES COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS**

USTA Serves, the National Charitable Foundation of the United States Tennis Association, has announced that it will grant 70 high school students a variety of college scholarships totaling \$398,000.

USTA Serves encourages children to pursue their goals and highest dreams by succeeding in school and becoming responsible citizens. Each year, it awards scholarships to deserving youth who have participated in USTA and other organized youth tennis programs, have demonstrated high academic achievement, and require financial assistance for college matriculation.

“USTA Serves is proud to be able to contribute almost \$400,000 to help these deserving students across the country to begin their college careers,” said Deborah Slaner Larkin, Executive Director, USTA Serves. “It is our hope and firm belief that these young men and women will continue to positively impact the sport of tennis and the world at large throughout their lives.”

Nineteen of the scholar athletes are NJTL participants, including Neil Goel, a Sandia High School senior from Albuquerque, N.M. who was awarded the prestigious Dwight F. Davis Memorial Scholarship. The award is named for Dwight Davis, past president of the US Lawn Tennis Association and founder of the Davis Cup tournament.

For more information about USTA Serves college scholarships, visit [www.usta.com/ustaserves](http://www.usta.com/ustaserves).

## NJTL SUPPORTS PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

The Excellence Team project is a pilot program demonstrating the impact that community-based NJTL chapters can have on player development outcomes. Using Team Agassi from the Andre Agassi Boys & Girls Club as our model, we support the development of one team on either coast. These teams are composed of high-potential scholar athletes from diverse backgrounds who do not have the means to pay for the type of training provided through this project. We ensure that coaching resources, facilities, training opportunities and tournaments are all excellent, so that the only barrier facing these kids is the competition they face on-court. Our goal for this project is to produce college scholarships and college graduates by focusing resources on those kids who demonstrate the talent and desire to play at the collegiate level, and who would otherwise not have the opportunity.

The **Junior Tennis Champions Center**, in College Park, MD, is led by Ray Benton, a long-time tennis industry executive. On the west coast, **Youth Tennis San Diego**, in San Diego, CA is led by Kerry Blum who has played a major role in developing YTSD into a Flagship NJTL chapter.

As they develop, the two chapters are producing very promising indicators of success that are common with Team Agassi:

- Individualized development schedules including tournaments, stroke development, physical training, mental training, and reviewing these plans periodically.
- Team camaraderie is a mutually reinforcing aspect that is great not only for the team members but also for the overall program as these teams are made visible with team uniforms, team practices, travel, and more.
- Producing “home grown” nationally-ranked players is possible with excellent resources, even for players who are relative late-comers to the game and who have not specialized in tennis until 10, 11, or 12. On average, team members are 12 years of age and are selected for their desire, will, and hunger, for future success. These attributes are just as important if not more so than selection based on current skill or athletic ability.

And while adding a player development component forces local NJTL chapters to make hard decisions about the allocation of resources, this kind of high-impact programming lends itself to successful fundraising from individuals.

## SUPPORT USTA/NJTL

As an NJTL supporter, you will keep kids out of harms way, provide them with a supportive and safe environment, and instill the values of hard work, education, and sportsmanship. Supporting NJTL supports the community.

To find an NJTL in your area or learn more about the benefits of starting an NJTL program, visit [www.usta.com/njtl](http://www.usta.com/njtl), call 914-696-7136, or email [njtl@usta.com](mailto:njtl@usta.com).

## ANSWER: (SEE "DID YOU KNOW?" QUESTION ON PAGE 2)

In addition to Art of Conservation in Rwanda, NJTL has two other honorary chapters on the African continent.

They are:

1. Zion Zone in Nairobi, Kenya
2. Sadili Oval in Langata, Kenya



Mbagathi Primary School, part of Zion Zone in Kenya

## NJTL MISSION



Photo Credit: [www.sporting-heroes.net](http://www.sporting-heroes.net)

NJTL develops the character of young people by emphasizing the ideals and life of Arthur Ashe. NJTL chapters nationwide provide free or low-cost programming for youth during out-of-school time. This growing network of community-based organizations strengthens the core of local communities by using tennis and education to help keep kids safe, healthy and strong. NJTL chapters offer a variety of programming, such as tutoring, nutrition counseling and drug education – all centered on engaging and interactive on-court group

activities. While NJTLs vary in size and programming, they all share a common commitment to youth development, community building, and tennis as a lifetime sport.

## FAST FACTS

As of June 2010

- ▶ The 558 organizations in the NJTL network reach over 225,000 participants ages 5-18
- ▶ NJTLs 68% of NJTL network participants are multicultural
- ▶ 81% of NJTLs have programming at school facilities
- ▶ The combined youth participation budgets of all NJTL chapters is \$100,437,481
- ▶ There are 4,646 tennis instructors in the NJTL network
- ▶ To date, 77% of the 2010 USTA Serves program grants have been awarded to NJTLs