



USTA MILITARY OUTREACH

USTA and the U.S. Armed Forces
Bringing tennis to our military and their families

Military Proclamation Ceremony First in 12 Years

This year's US Open brought a new 'first' to the USTA. The Board of Directors presented the first proclamations in over 12 years to military leaders in attendance at the Presidents Suite on Family Day at the Open. The USTA has heard the call of First Lady Michelle Obama and Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Biden. Both ladies have called for action by communities and volunteer organizations to reach out to military families to help reduce the every day stresses military families experience while loved ones are deployed and upon return from conflict. It is widely accepted that recreation reduces stress and improves one's mental outlook. Tennis is a perfect recreational vehicle for players of all ages and abilities. It's therapeutic, social, physically challenging, and inexpensive to play. There is a tennis program in nearly every city in the United States wherever the service member or his or her family may be.



From the very highest levels of the board room to grassroots tennis organizations across the country, the USTA has pledged its support for deployed service members, military families and children, wounded warri-

ors, returning veterans in each branch of the military service, as well as Reservists and the National Guard members who all reside in civilian communities across the country.

Tennis Communities across the country are finding ways to support Military Families



The San Diego tennis community and the local military hospital have joined forces to sponsor the "Wounded Warriors" tennis program. As reported by Jill Phipps for USPTA Magazine, members of the United States Professional Tennis Association, with help from experienced club players, are offering free tennis clinics twice a month at Balboa Tennis Club in San Diego. Phipps reports, Geoff Griffin, USPTA Professional and tennis director at Balboa Tennis Club, started the Wounded Warriors program in conjunction with Naval Medical Center San Diego in November 2009. One year later, Wounded Warriors tennis is still changing lives. "Therapists tell me that what we are doing is helping the soldiers a lot," Griffin said. "We are told to be tough but kind. We teach them the sport, make it fun and try and kick their butts a little. That's what they need."

Other organizations like the Midlothian Tennis Association in Midlothian, TX take another just as meaningful route. In an effort to reach out to military families in the area, the Midlothian Tennis Association offers free tennis to military families during its summer league season. All tennis associations can reach out and partner in many ways to help military families in their communities feel welcomed and embraced. Many YMCAs have programs for military youth and are another great way for tennis associations to reach out and offer recreational opportunities.



Adopt a Unit Program partners with National Recreation Foundation

The USTA has received a \$112,000 grant from the National Recreation Foundation to help fund the purchase and shipment of portable tennis equipment as part of the USTA's Adopt-A-Unit program. The program which kicked off in November, challenges the USTA's 1100 Community Tennis Associations to 'adopt' a unit of 100 deployed service members in Iraq or Afghanistan sending needed items in care packages. In turn, the USTA will send portable tennis equipment to the unit of service members so they can have a healthy, stress reducing ac-

"Its like B co. had a Secret Santa with inside knowledge of exactly what the soldiers wanted! On behalf of all the soldiers, NCO's, and Officers of Bravo Company 526th 2nd Brigade Support Battalion, thank you all and Merry Christmas! "

tivity in their down time. Over 20 units have been adopted to date, and a major push will begin in February so the USTA can reach it's goal of 250 units. One of the early tennis communities that has adopted a unit is the Birmingham Area Tennis Association in Birmingham, AL. Effort organizer Kevin Theos wrote to the USTA, "We mailed ten boxes to Afghanistan today! One NJTL parent happened to have art supplies in her car, so the kids were able to decorate the letters and even make some cards from scratch. " Later in the week, Theos shared email re-

marks from the commander of his unit noted in this article.

Visit usta.com/adoptaunit for information on how your tennis community can get involved.

NJTL members in Birmingham, AL sign letters to the troops that will be placed in each box shipped to their 'adopted' unit



USTA Partners with National Organizations

USTA Military Outreach is partnering with national organizations with like minded goals. As part of the effort to collect addresses for the Adopt A Unit program, the USTA has partnered with West Point Parents and Alumni, Adopt A Soldier Platoon, USO North Carolina (who serves 250,000 service members and their families), and is in talks with USO about inclusion of portable tennis

equipment in all USO2GO shipments to deployed service members.

In August, the USTA partnered with Freedom Alliance to bring six military families to a private suite for a day at the US Open. The families were thrilled with the great treatment and fabulous matches they attended. If your organization would like to partner with



Military families and Wounded Warriors were treated to a Day at the Open, compliments of USTA and Freedom Alliance

the USTA, contact Military@USTA.com



USTA Addresses MWR Specialists at the Athletic Business Conference

The USTA Facility Assistance Team addressed the US Navy Moral Welfare and Recreation Leaders from across the world at a workshop which took place at the Athletic Business Conference in San Diego, CA in December. The USTA booth featured a 36 foot tennis court which was a highlight of the conference, which is the most heavily attended military recreation conference.



USTA Assesses Navy Tennis Facilities



Members of the USTA's Facility Assistance team were recently invited to assess eight Navy tennis facilities located in the Norfolk, VA area. Navy MWR requested the site visits as a part of their effort to improve Navy

recreation facilities across the country. Tennis is being prioritized as one of the possible sport facilities for improvement. The team presented the Navy with an extensive analysis of the facilities along with concept plans to help bring the facilities up to tennis industry standards. The USTA looks forward to assessing tennis facilities in other regions of the country for the US Navy.

USTA Introduces Navy Wounded Warriors to Tennis

USTA Wheelchair Coaches Jason Harnett and Paul Walker joined Military Outreach Consultant Robin Jones in Port Hueneme, CA at a Team Navy Wounded Warrior training. For the very first time, the USTA has introduced tennis to the Wounded Warriors and their caregivers who are preparing for the Warrior Trials, a part of the USOC's Warrior Games held

in Colorado Springs every year. Although tennis is not currently a part of the Warrior Games, the Navy recognizes that tennis is a sport of a lifetime that can be played by sailors of all abilities, and is including tennis in it's recreation options. The team will attend the next training taking place on February 22nd in Port Hueneme, CA just north of Los Angeles.



USTA Continues to Meet with Military Leaders in Washington, DC

Members of the USTA's Military Outreach Team continue to visit military leaders in Washington, DC to explore ways for bringing tennis to our service members and their families. The USTA has a mission to support the recreational and stress reduction needs of military service members and their families, especially in this time of ongoing overseas conflict. Initiatives and partnerships are underway to support deployed personnel, their children and families, wounded warriors, National Guardsmen and Reservist who all live in civilian communities where USTA Community Tennis Associations are established, as well as on-installation personnel here in the U.S.



The background of the entire page is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in a wavy pattern. The top and bottom portions of the page are dominated by the blue field with white stars, while the middle portion is a solid dark blue band containing the text.

The USTA and the United States Armed Forces

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

For information on supporting these efforts contact Military@usta.com



UNITED STATES TENNIS ASSOCIATION