

# BUILDING THE FUTURE

# FIRST SERVICE

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VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

JULY 2025





## BUILDING THE FUTURE

### EAST ST. LOUIS SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL TENNIS COURTS RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY



The morning of May 16 birthed even more opportunity to build community and lifelong learning of tennis with the unveiling of six new courts at East Saint Louis Senior High School. The East St. Louis Community Tennis Association was instrumental in bringing to the project to life. Also vital to the process was grants from USTA National, USTA Missouri Valley and USTA St. Louis totaling \$51,500.

Generous grant support from the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO) also made the dream of building new courts a reality. **See Ceremony on pg. 6**

<https://eaststlouiscta.org/>



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## LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT **Scott Stinson**



Thank you for taking the time to read our July newsletter. It is tempting to sit back and think of all we have accomplished in the last 15 years.... I am not going to give in to that temptation. We live in the here and now, so I will spend a few minutes to let you know how our present and future plans involve you or your children or grandchildren - and how you can contribute either financially or as a volunteer.

This year is a quantum leap for East St. Louis Tennis.

In partnership with the East St. Louis School District, USTA, USTA Missouri Valley, and USTA St. Louis District, we cut the ribbon on a beautiful six court tennis facility at East St. Louis Senior High School. It is already making an impact, hosting two tournaments, weekend junior lessons, and will host practice and matches for the East St. Louis Flyettes in a few weeks.

We are hosting lessons at two sites - Lincoln Park for adults and East St. Louis High School for juniors. Our attendance is booming, often having over 40 kids and adults attend lessons. We also continue to teach tennis in the schools and visited an elementary school for National Tennis Month, as well as taking over PE classes at Lincoln Middle School and Mason Clark Middle School.

**“What does the future look like? It looks a lot like what I described above, coupled with a drive to improve our non-tennis educational programs, develop our juniors with more advanced training and competitive play.”**

What does the future look like? It looks a lot like what I described above, coupled with a drive to improve our non-tennis educational programs, develop our juniors with more advanced training and competitive play. It looks like developing our already excellent team of coaches with more training, and developing our board so that we can continue to improve this Community Tennis Association and the impact it has in the City of East St. Louis.

If you or your children/grandchildren would like to learn the game of tennis, you can start here by signing up for one of our free Saturday clinics. <https://playtennis.usta.com/eslcta/Coaching>. **See Letter on pg. 6**

# TOURNAMENT & LESSONS TIME!

## Juniors

A USTA Junior Circuit is an event that uses a non-elimination, round-robin draw format for players of all ages to gain match experience in a tournament setting. These fun events give players the opportunity to develop their skills through level-based play while learning and demonstrating good sportsmanship. East St. Louis CTA holds several of the non-elimination tournaments throughout the year; two of these events are complete in 2025 but stay tuned for more information on tournaments in the fall.

### East St. Louis CTA Junior Circuit - March 7, 2025

Thirteen juniors took part in the first junior circuit event of 2025. The generosity of our donors makes events like these possible. Huge congratulations to all who participated!



18s: Kiley King (1st)



18s: Molly Toal (2nd)



18s: Allison Molner (3rd)



12s: Piety Lewis McClinton (1st)



12s: Phoenix Cobbs (2nd)



12s: Jubilee Lewis McClinton (3rd)



12s: James Mathes (1st)



12s: Yuvaan Chintapally  
(2nd)



12s: Arman Rahman (3rd)

# TOURNAMENT & LESSONS TIME!

## Juniors

**East St. Louis CTA Junior Circuit, Free Lessons  
- May 31, 2025**



May 31 was a day for the history books for the organization and the community of East St. Louis. The first-ever tournament was held at the new East St. Louis Senior High School tennis courts. The day began with tournament play, and culminated lessons for children of all ages.

This edition of the junior circuit event saw 14 players in three ages groups compete and display excellent sportsmanship, while over 40 juniors came to the courts to learn the game. It's events like the junior tournaments and lessons that make tennis more and more accessible to our community. East St. Louis CTA lessons are always free to those who take part - and scholarships for tournament fees are available for those who wish to experience tournament play. See page 11 of First Service for more information on upcoming lessons and tournaments.



***Ceremony from pg. 2***

East St. Louis School District 189 superintendant Arthur Culver in his remarks said he believes the next Venus or Serena Williams can come out of East St. Louis

The courts will be the home facility for the East St. Louis Senior High School girls' tennis team and is another in tennis for both East St. Louis School District 189 and entire community.

Flyers coach Rachel Stribling said at the ceremony no longer having to travel to courts for practice is exciting.

"They're out here working hard," Stribling said. "They didn't get a racket in their hand when they were three or five years old...But they get out there and they compete so hard. It makes me speechless. So that's why I know we could do so much more. I'm so excited about these courts."

East St. Louis CTA offers free junior and adult lessons on Saturdays during the summer at the courts. For more information, see pg. 11 - or to register for junior lessons, [click here](#). For adult lessons registration, [click here](#).



***Letter from pg. 2***

If you would like to donate financially to our organization, you may do one-time or recurring donations in the link below. Please consider a recurring donation as it helps us better plan our budget/funding with a steady income stream. We have many opportunities if you would like to volunteer as well! to help. You can let us know by clicking the below link.

Lastly, we are grateful for the many folks who help us by volunteering and donating equipment, including the guy who gave me an unexpected \$500 check on the tennis court this summer. Of particular note, I would like to single out Bob Dienstbach who supports with financial donations, as well as refurbished rackets. I'd also like to shout out The Racketman who collects used rackets/equipment which we receive several times a year. Hope to see you on the courts!

Scott Stinson

**To Donate (one-time or recurring)**

<https://eaststlouiscta.org/get-involved/donate/>.

**To Volunteer**

[https://eaststlouiscta.org/get-involved/volunteer\\_trashed/one-time-volunteer-opportunities/](https://eaststlouiscta.org/get-involved/volunteer_trashed/one-time-volunteer-opportunities/)

# MAKING AN IMPACT

## School Outreach

### Lincoln Middle School

From late January until early March, kids from all across East St. Louis got together for extracurricular, hands-on learning through the 40 Days of Nonviolence program. We were pleased to spend an hour on each Saturdays during the 40 days to bring tennis to kids at Lincoln Middle School. The kids took part in beginning tennis drills that emphasize balance and hand-eye coordination, before working on getting the ball over the net. These introductory lessons, where kids have positive experiences while learning the sport, are crucial to development. But these kind of events are also so important in bringing tennis to all.



### James Avant Elementary School

As part of National Tennis Month in May, we paid a visit to James Avant Elementary School with goodie bags full of all things tennis - tennis rackets and balls, as well as stickers, pens and medallions from the Illinois State Police. Finally, information about our organization was also included in the bags.



# TOURNAMENT & LESSONS TIME!

## Adults

### March 1, 2025

The fun of tournament play with the East St. Louis CTA extends to adults too! The organization hosted a one-night adult mixed tournament on March 1. These evening events promote sportsmanship, getting to know players across the area, and competitive fun. Congratulations and thank you to all who took part! Be on the look out for more adult tournament opportunities soon!



**6.0 Champs: Brett & Julie Miller**



**6.0 Runners-Up: Mary & Ryan Miksell**



**7.0 Champs: Jim Enright & Chelsea Frye**



**7.0 Runners-Up: Stacey Zoller & Amarnath Jambunathan**



**8.0 Champs: Hung Nguyen & Erica Sipes**



**8.0 Runners-Up: Scott Stinson & Val Green**

# TOURNAMENT & LESSONS TIME! Adults

## Free Lessons - Lincoln Park



More and more adults in the community are learning of the benefits of tennis on health - both physical and mental. In a continued commitment to bringing the sport to anyone who wishes to take part, lessons for adults are held on Saturdays during the summer in Lincoln Park. Almost weekly someone new comes to the park to learn proper technique and to have a great time! Tennis is a sport that can be played by people of all ages and abilities! We are beyond proud to continue bringing this great sport to anyone wanting to enjoy the game. The benefits of tennis include:



- Stronger bones
- Reduces stress
- Cardiovascular fitness
- Weight loss
- New relationships within communities



# you go, coco!

## Gauff Wins French Open



American Coco Gauff won her second major, defeating Aryna Sabalenka in the French Open final, 6-7 (5), 6-2, 6-4. Gauff is the first American woman to win Roland Garros since Serena Williams took the title in 2015.

Not only did Gauff best Sabalenka for the second time in a major final, but she avenged her 2024 French Open loss to Iga Swiatek in the semifinals. In 2024, Swiatek handed Gauff the loss in straight sets in the semifinals. But this time it was Gauff who cruised to a 6-1, 6-1 victory.

### ABOUT COCO GAUFF:

**Born:** March 13, 2004

**Age:** 21

**Turned pro:** 2018

**Current (and Highest Ranking):** 2

**First WTA Tour Title:** 2019 Linz Open, defeating Jelena Ostapenko

**First WTA Major Title:** 2023 US Open, vs. Aryna Sabalenka 2-6, 6-3, 6-2

**Sponsor:** New Balance

**Racquet:** Head Graphene 360 Speed MP



# East St. Louis CTA Schedule

## Free Lessons Schedule:

### July

#### July 19, 26: 2025 Junior Summer Lessons

- East St. Louis Senior High School (4901 STATE ST.)
- 8:30 a.m. - 10 a.m.
- Ages 3-18
- FREE!

#### July 19, 26: 2025 Adult Summer Lessons

- Lincoln Park (606 S. 15<sup>th</sup> St.)
- 8:30 a.m. - 10 a.m.
- Ages 18-75
- FREE!

### August

#### August 2 & 9: 2025 Junior Summer Lessons

- East St. Louis Senior High School (4901 STATE ST.)
- 8:30 a.m. - 10 a.m.
- Ages 3-18
- FREE!

#### August 2 & 9: 2025 Adult Summer Lessons

- Lincoln Park (606 S. 15<sup>th</sup> St.)
- 8:30 a.m. - Noon
- Ages 18-75
- FREE!

## Tournament Schedule:

### July

#### July 20: USTA Junior Circuit: USTA STL East St Louis CTA BG,12

- East St. Louis Senior High School (4901 STATE ST)
- Co-ed 10U Orange and Green Ball
- Boys and Girls 12U Green Ball

### August

#### Aug. 9-11: Level 5 Open: USTA MV Level 5 Open BG 16-18

- Dwight Davis Tennis Center (620 GRAND DR, SAINT LOUIS, MO, 63112)
- Boys and Girls 16U - Singles & Doubles
- Boys and Girls 18U - Singles & Doubles
- \$26.38 - \$98.96 registration fee

 Mix it Up for East St. Louis! Be on the lookout for more info coming soon!