



ANNUAL REPORT 2025



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OVERVIEW

The East St. Louis Community Tennis Association 2025 Annual Report highlights our key achievements, financial performance, and strategic initiatives over the past year. This report provides an in-depth look at the organization's growth, operational success, and contributions to the community.

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT



This year was a fantastic one for growth for our organization and the tennis population it serves. Our numbers of kids and adults increased dramatically with the addition of the six new courts at East St. Louis High School. Our donors and supporters helped increase our funding to support the additional programming. We were incredibly grateful as the year came to a close to take home the Community Tennis Association of the year award from both the USTA St. Louis District and USTA Missouri Valley. We are grateful for your support and excited to continue to grow tennis in 2026!

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/

MISSION

Promoting tennis as a fun and healthy lifestyle in the community of East St. Louis, Illinois, and the surrounding areas

VISION

We're working to bring the sport of tennis to kids in East St. Louis through courts, lessons and an equipment library.

OUR HISTORY

In 2012, Scott Stinson and Stan Angelov went to East St. Louis to play a match for their blog, inspired by Jimmy Connors and his close connection to East St. Louis. Finding no courts playable, they played their match elsewhere.

After, the tennis community expressed interest in helping bring tennis back to East St. Louis. We soon found East St. Louis also wanted to revive tennis and add to its rich tennis history.

In 2013, city treasurer and now East St. Louis CTA Vice President Joe Lewis invited the United States Tennis Association (USTA) to teach 90 minutes a week for six Saturdays in a program called the 40 Days of Non-Violence. Volunteers taught tennis to 40-100 kids each week. This continued in 2015 and 2016. Each child completing the 40 Days program was given a brand-new tennis racquet. The CTA was pleased to bring the program back in 2025 after a brief hiatus.

That same year, we collaborated with the school district to reestablish the girl's high school team and provide support. The East St. Louis Senior High School Flyerettes have seen growth in the number of participants each year since.

In 2014, we applied for and received a USTA Grant to completely rebuild the courts at Lincoln Park. We also applied to the state of Illinois for funding through a Department of Natural Resources grant. After funding difficulties with the state finally resolved, we were able to move forward. The almost \$300,000 project finished in the fall of 2018. As a result, the fall of 2018 saw the East St. Louis Lady Flyerettes play their first home match on the Lincoln Park Courts.



OUR HISTORY, CONT.

Soon after, the organization, with help from area coaches, provided free lessons for youth at the park. What started out with a few youths in the first year has blossomed to over 60 kids taking lessons each week. That same year, the East St. Louis Community Tennis Association became 501 C3 incorporated.

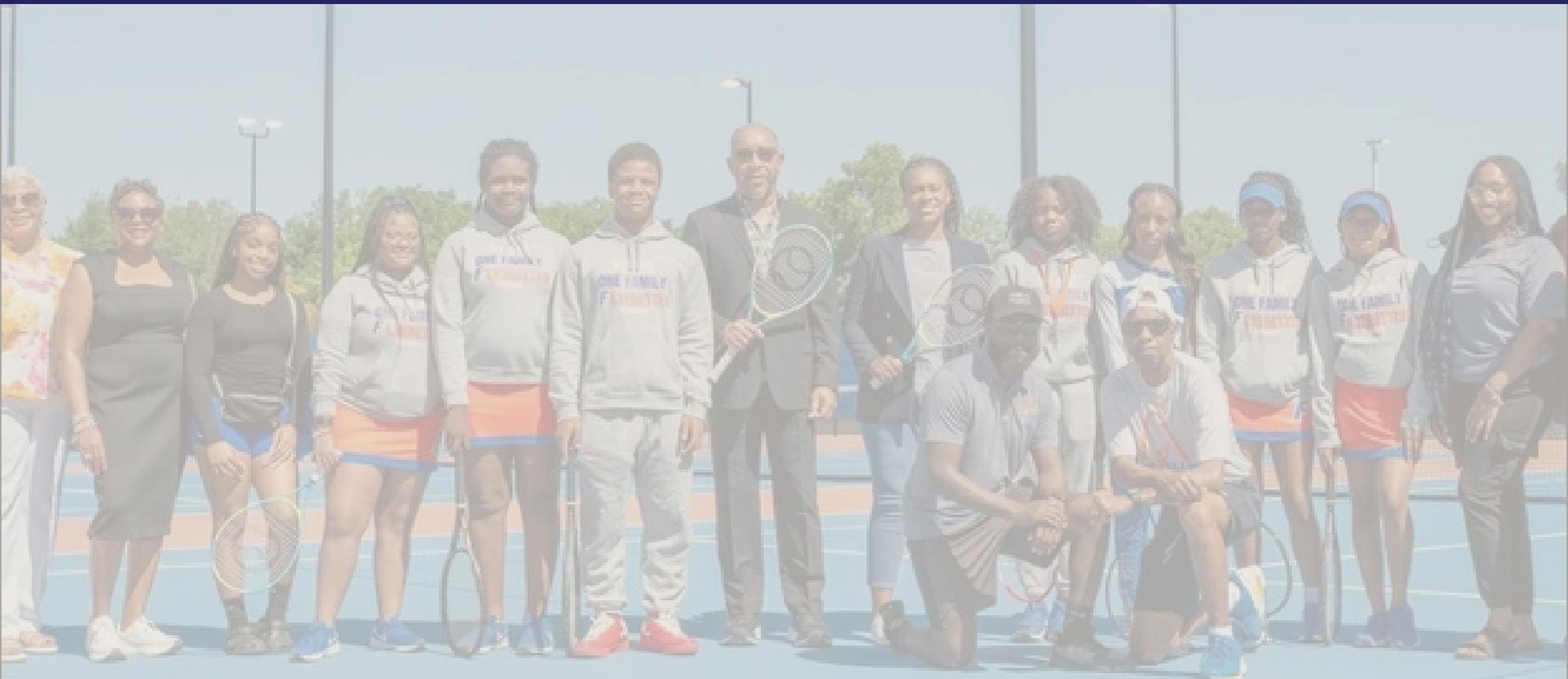
The growth in lessons participants is a direct result of one of our biggest endeavors to date: the construction of six new tennis courts at East St. Louis Senior High School. It took collaboration with several community and state organizations for our dream to come true. We are proud to say construction was completed in May of 2025.

In addition to providing free youth and adult lessons, we expanded our work in bringing tennis to each child in East St. Louis, including introducing the sport to PE classes at East St. Louis School District 189 during May's National Tennis Month.

Finally, we are proud to have expanded our offerings in 2024 and 2025 to sponsoring junior circuit tournaments and large section tournaments in partnership with the USTA.

Finally, we believe access to equipment should not be a deterrent to someone who wants to play tennis. The world's first free Little Tennis Library resides at the Lincoln Park Tennis courts. It is maintained by the East St. Louis Community Tennis Association and is stocked with racquets, balls and foam balls.





KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025

Programming Growth

East St. Louis CTA amassed a 300 percent growth in programming attendance in 2025, due in part to the addition of the six new tennis courts at East St. Louis Senior High School.

GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY

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. The project would not have been possible without the tremendous work and partnership with the East St. Louis School District 189.

East St. Louis School District 189 superintendent 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.

New Courts by the Numbers

6

New Tennis Courts

2

Junior Circuit Tournaments

13

Weeks Junior Programming

4

Girls High School Team Matches

“ I really believe that we can get another Venus Williams or Serena Williams coming out of East Saint Louis.

Arthur Culver
East St. Louis District 189 Superintendent



YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Youth Programming by the Numbers

50+

Youth at programming
each week

300

Percent jump in youth
served from 2024

Because of the opening of the tennis courts at East St. Louis Senior High School, we can provide free lessons for even more youth. With six courts, we saw over 50 children attend our lessons each week. Our goal is to have these lessons provide a catalyst for putting tennis in East St. Louis on the map. We are beyond thankful for our coaches, donors and sponsors who make these lessons possible. We provide equipment to any child who needs it. Seeing a child's face light up when they accomplish a goal is such a gift. We are fortunate to now be able to hold lessons during the cold months inside the Cave in Belleville.



Did you know? In a survey provided at the end of the summer youth and adult lessons, 90 percent of survey participants noted they would return for lessons this summer, and 100 percent of participants surveyed reported they enjoyed the lessons.



ADULT PROGRAMMING



Adult Programming by the Numbers

20+

Adults at programming
each week

100

Percent jump in adults
served from 2024

East St. Louis CTA does not only serve youth, but our adult programming has the same goals as youth: creating community through tennis. Our free summer lessons held at Lincoln Park saw a healthy increase in participants. The lessons included teaching basic stroke technique to serves and doubles strategy. Besides forming bonds with our players, the best part of the summer was seeing the progress the participants made as the season went on.



Greg Chamberlain



Kevin Hood



Kion Hudson



Kim Hughes



Bernard King



Johnnie Singleton



Rachel Stribling



**Junior Coach
Nia Harris**



**Junior Coach
Chloe Henry**

OUR COACHES

Coaching by the Numbers

12

7

Coaches instructing youth

New coaches in 2025

Our coaches are a hugely important part of what we do. Without the dedication they show by guiding the juniors and adults in lessons week after week, we could not execute our mission. We're also thankful to have a pair of junior coaches who show our kids sticking with the sport can pay off when playing in junior tournaments and high school.



Play today. Grow tomorrow. Love tennis for life.

Tennis teaches you how to compete with the others and how to believe in yourself.

Kevin Hood
CTA Coach



IN OUR SCHOOLS

Introducing tennis to each child in East St. Louis is a huge part of our mission. One way we are working to accomplish this is by working with the East St. Louis School District 189 to find opportunities to visit schools and introduce the game. 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.

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.

In our Schools by the Numbers

4

School Visits in 2025

1,000

Students Impacted





Junior Tournaments by the Numbers

3

Junior Circuit
Tournaments

1

Junior Section
Tournament

40

Junior Circuit
Participants

200

Section Tournament
Participants

JUNIOR TOURNAMENTS

In 2025 we expanded our reach by holding three junior circuit tournaments, serving just over 40 youth in four age divisions. USTA Junior Circuit uses a non-elimination, round-robin draw format for players of all ages to gain match experience. In partnership with USTA St. Louis, we hosted an L4 junior section tournament in August that saw very high-level tennis, and over 200 juniors from across the country take part. We look forward to taking what we learned from 2025 and making 2026 even better!





Adult Tournaments by the Numbers

2

Adult Tournaments

52

Adult Tournament
Participants

ADULT TOURNAMENTS

One of our favorite events is the annual Mix it Up for East St. Louis. Events like Mix it Up and other adult one-night tournaments give us the chance to not only raise money to make our youth programming possible, but to also spread our mission of fostering strong community. We look forward to holding more adult tournaments in 2026.



“ I love playing in these tournaments! They’re always well run & a great way to help support our young players. Nelson Mandela thought ‘Sport could change the world.’ I love to see that spirit locally.

Julie Miller

Adult Tournament Participant

IN THE NEWS



In 2025 the East St. Louis CTA further expanded its reach in the community. We continue our work in East St. Louis District 189 Schools, as well as expanding our lessons offerings at the CAVE in Belleville. The ribbon cutting of the six new courts at East St. Louis Senior High School was among the many highlights of 2025. And that work has not gone unnoticed. Some of our best work in 2025 is featured in the local media, including Spectrum News, USTA Missouri Valley, the St. Louis American, and the Alton River Bender. See links to the stories below:

March 5, 2025 (USTA Missouri Valley): [Tennis Ties it All Together for East St. Louis Children](#)

May 14, 2025 (Riverbender.com): [East St. Louis Senior High Debuts New Tennis Courts](#)

May 15, 2025 (St. Louis American): [Net attraction, ESL Schools to Unveil New Tennis Courts](#)

May 16, 2025 (Spectrum Local News): [East St. Louis High School Gets New Tennis Courts](#)

August 25, 2025 (USTA): [East St. Louis Community Tennis Association Wraps Successful Summer](#)

AWARDS



Awards By the Numbers

3

USTA St. Louis Awards

2

USTA Missouri Valley Awards

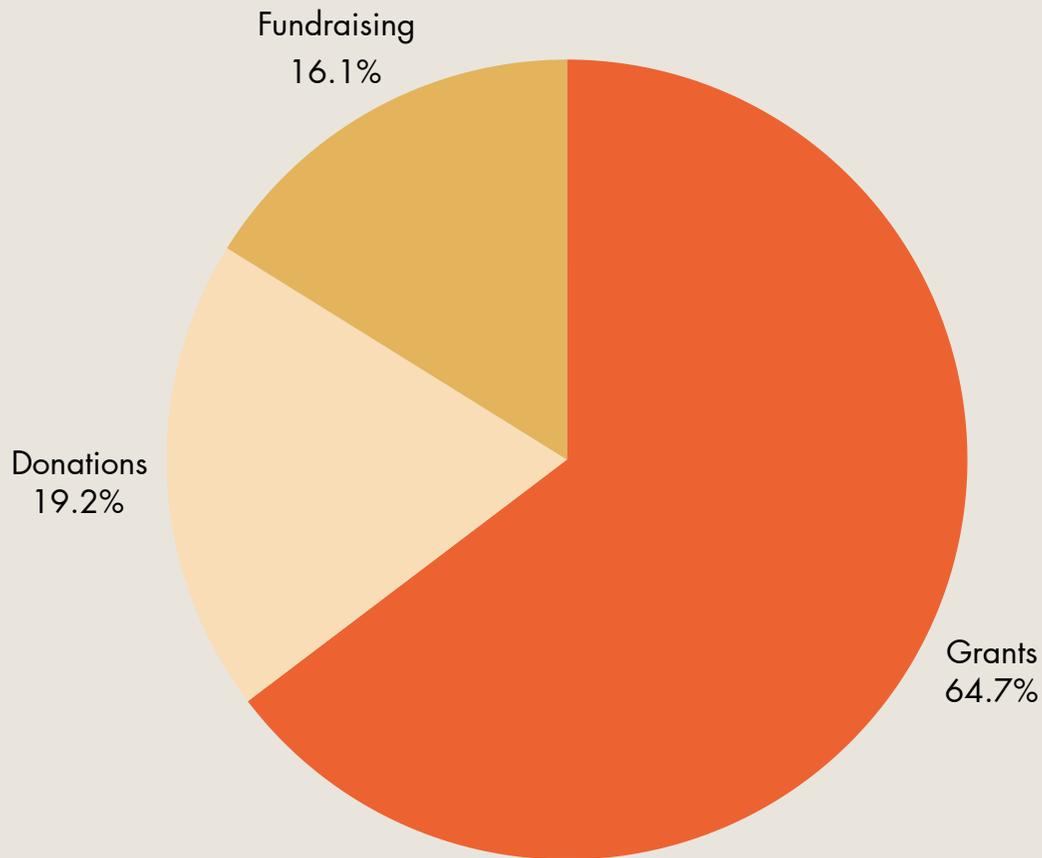
2

Other Community Awards



East St. Louis CTA is the recipient of the Outstanding CTA award for both USTA St. Louis and USTA Missouri Valley. Several youth and members of our board attended the USTA St. Louis Awards ceremony in November, while several board members also took part in the USTA Missouri Valley Awards Luncheon in early December. These awards are a testament to our dedication to contributing not only to our community, but to the St. Louis area tennis scene.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



Grants

\$48,000

Donations

\$14,000.36

Fundraising

\$11,969.02

Total

\$73,969.38

GOALS FOR 2026

- Increase both youth and adult program attendance
- Create opportunities for our youth players to participate in advanced level junior tournaments
- Establish an East St. Louis Community Tennis Association Junior Team Tennis team.
- Provide an even better section tournament experience for junior participants

PARTNERS



BOARD

Scott Stinson
PRESIDENT

Joe W. Lewis, Jr.
VICE PRESIDENT

Teaira Spencer
SECRETARY

Kimberly Hughes-Gill
TREASURER

Donna Ferrell
BOARD MEMBER

Kevin Hood
BOARD MEMBER

Johnnie Singleton
BOARD MEMBER

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DONORS

We are passionate about bringing community through tennis in East St. Louis. But we could not do it without YOU! On behalf of the board of East St. Louis CTA, we THANK YOU! Our growth in 2025 would not be possible without our donors and volunteers. We are excited for what 2026 brings! We cannot wait to tell you what is in store!

AAA Foundation	Brett Allen	Ann Corley	Bill Ihotka	Theresa Reck	Sharon Taysi
Bank of Springfield	Kim Anderson	Doug Druker	John Kinsella	Keith Robertson	Craig & Kim Tidwell
Bland Family Foundation	Kathy Arnold	Rebecca Dw	Brian Kirk	Anne Ross	Brian Thomsen
The Buddy Fund	Santiago Beltran	Bob Faust	Greg Lucas	Eauclaire C. Shelby	Eduardo Vera
Central Realty	Troy Bixler	Elissa Ford	Carli Marlowe	Judy Sindecuse	Gabriel Vuagniaux
Cerro Flow Corp.	Michelle Brower-Kitchens	Rob Good	Mike Marshall	Art Staden	Scott Wachter
Gateway Confluence	Jacqueline Buck-Horton	Kate Hatfield	Megan Kovacs	Nakia Staten	Tim Wahl
Wheelchair Sports Foundation	Emily Callahan	Riquita Henry	Jason Mathes	Scott Stinson	Tom Wheeland
Honor of Craig Sandvig Hall of Fame Induction	Jay Campbell	Kimberly Hughes	John McGowan	Sharon Stinson	Beffy Wieman
Network for Good	Beth Causey	Patrick Higgins	Andrew & Kristen Miedler	William Stinson	Mark Zolman
Potthoff Family Foundation	Jane Clare	Holly Ingraham	John Nuernberg	Florence Streeter	
Sterling Bank					

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