

SUMMER FUN & TENNIS



FIRST SERVICE

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DAY**

**YOUTH
COACHES**

MIX IT UP

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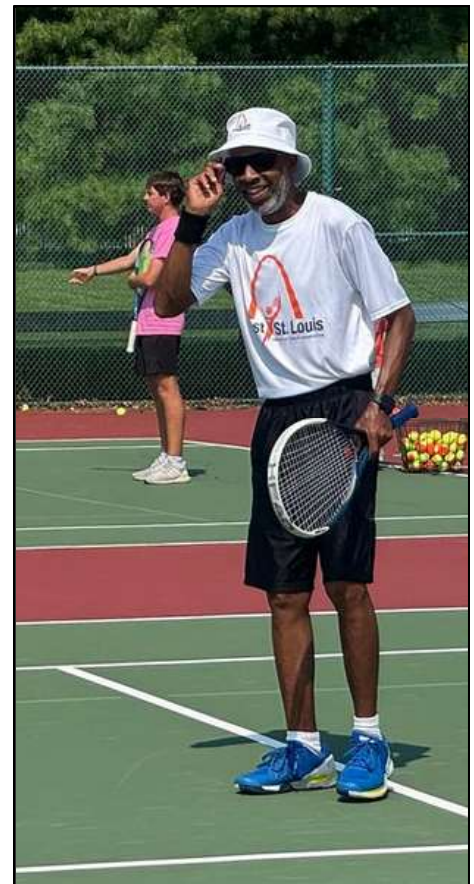
DIVERSITY DAY 2026 EDWARDSVILLE FUTURES



The Edwardsville Futures hosted its annual Diversity Day on July 29 at Liberty Middle School in Edwardsville. The clinic highlights and honors the trailblazers, pioneers, and communities that have helped make tennis open and inclusive.

East St. Louis CTA was a big part of the day. Coach and board member Kevin Hood assisted with the free lessons the day provided. One of our youth players, Phoenix Cobbs, got a chance to hit with the pro circuit tournament singles top seed Johannus Monday.

The guest of honor was Kweisi Kenyatta, a former University of Illinois tennis player.





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LETTER FROM **KEVIN HOOD** EAST ST. LOUIS CTA BOARD MEMBER & COACH

This summer was about more than learning to play tennis; 🎾 it was about building confidence, developing lifelong skills, and creating a pathway for adults to enjoy the game for years to come. Through the red-ball initiative, players learned the basic fundamentals, strengthening consistency, and embracing the core habits that lead to improvement.

As they continue to grow, our hope is that our players will transition into recreational match play, USTA leagues and become lifelong ambassadors for tennis in the community.

Tennis 🎾 is a sport for everyone. It brings together people of every age, background, and ability. It creates friendships, strengthens families, and builds communities. The lessons learned on the court are carried into school, work, relationships, and life.

Thank you to all of our youth who showed up each week ready to learn. We also want to express our gratitude to our partners, sponsors, parents, and volunteers who made this fantastic summer possible.



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/

EAST ST. LOUIS CTA SUMMER FINALE

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SATURDAY, AUG. 15
EAST ST. LOUIS SENIOR
HIGH TENNIS COURTS

Free tennis lessons from 8:30-10:30 a.m.

- Ice cream truck
- DJ Tyler Davis
- Food truck with burgers & other goodies!
- Giveaways - rackets, balls, shirts, tennis clothes & more!



Huge thanks to the East St. Louis CTA Board, our youth participants, parents, coaches, volunteers, partners & donors for a fantastic summer!



Board Members Honored

Huge congratulations to board members Scott Stinson (president) and Kim Hughes-Gill (treasurer) on being honorees at the Emma L. Wilson King Foundation Gala. At the gala, hosted by former KSDK sports reporter Rene Knott, our board members were recognized for their tireless work with our organization and their impact on the East St. Louis. The gala took place June 27.

The Emma L. Wilson King Foundation is dedicated to the enhancement of the neighborhoods and community of East St. Louis, such as public parks, gardens, buildings, neighborhood organizations, educational enhancement of both young and old through schools (scholarships) and community centers.



The Foundation is in memory of Emma L. Wilson King, which is formed out of her strong yet simple sense of caring and giving.



YOUTH COACH SPOTLIGHT

Each summer youth tennis players assist our coaches in teaching lessons. This kind of mentorship is hugely important to our outreach efforts and bringing tennis to as many in our community as possible. Their kindness and dedication to giving back sets an excellent example to our youth.



Chloe Henry

Chloe Henry has played tennis her entire life.

As she enters her senior year at Westminster Christian Academy, Chloe is thinking of her college plans. Will it involve tennis? She isn't quite sure. But she knows she'd like to attend pharmacy school.

Chloe is in her second summer working with the East St. Louis CTA, helping with lessons and mentoring our youth. She enjoys the interactions she has with both the kids and their parents. Her favorite part about teaching is making concepts easy to understand.

"I really like working with kids. It's fun to show them the things I have learned and make it easier for them."

Last high school season, Westminster took home the Class 2, District 2 championship, defeating the top-seed in the finals. Chloe hopes the team can take that success into her final prep season.



Avi Patel knows the importance of having a good teacher. He credits those who have helped shape his tennis journey - through the USTA junior ranks, as well as his high school career. He wants to pay that forward.



Avi Patel

This is Avi's first summer helping us run our youth clinics and so far, he is enjoying mentoring youth, especially in a sport that is working towards being accessible to all.

"I love teaching because it's a chance to pass down what I've learned. It feels really good to share something I am good at with other people. These days so many people are online, so tennis is a good opportunity to be outside."

Avi is entering his junior season of high school, spending two years playing varsity tennis at John Burroughs School, but will play this upcoming season at Ladue. He hopes to improve upon his 4th place finish in doubles in 2026. While Avi was at John Burroughs, the team also captured back-to-back MSHAA State Tennis titles in Class 3. Ladue has won consecutive Class 2 state titles.

LEAVING IT ALL OUT ON THE COURT

Ben Shelton



American tennis player Ben Shelton's star keeps rising.

Shelton burst onto the scene as a collegiate player at the University of Florida, where he won a singles championship in 2022. In that year, Shelton also took home National and SEC Player of the Year honors.

Soon after, Shelton joined the ATP Tour full-time, making his debut at the Atlanta Open. After securing a wild card at the Cincinnati Open he secured his first-ever top 10 win, defeating Casper Ruud.

Shelton's best weapon is his serve. He is capable of a big first serve, which averages 126 miles per hour. He is currently the top-ranked player in the United States and is No. 5 in the world.

His five ATP tour titles include the 2026 Dallas and Stuttgart Open.

About Ben Shelton

Born: Oct. 9, 2002

Turned Pro: 2022

Plays: Left-handed

Racquet: Yonex EZONE 98

Best Grand Slam Result(s): Australian Open (Semi-Finals, 2025); U.S. Open (Semi-finals, 2023)





MIX IT UP FOR EAST ST. LOUIS

SATURDAY, OCT. 10

10 AM - 3 PM

***HIGHLANDS GOLF & TENNIS CENTER
5163 CLAYTON AVE., ST LOUIS, MO 63111***

\$50.00/PERSON

**DOUBLES PARTNER
CHOSEN FOR YOU**



**FOOD & DRINK
INCLUDED!
AUCTION
ITEMS, TOO!**

**MORE INFORMATION:
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