



**KINGS COUNTY  
TENNIS LEAGUE**

**2021**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

**THE POWER  
OF PLAY**

# WHERE WE PLAY



The map shows Kings County with several colored dots and lines connecting to club logos below. The dots are: a grey dot in the northwest, a blue dot in the center, a green dot in the northeast, a purple dot in the northeast, a brown dot in the northeast, and a dark blue dot in the southeast. Lines connect these dots to the logos for Ingersoll, Lafayette Gardens, Marcy, Tompkins, Sumner, and Jackie Robinson Tennis Clubs.



 <p><b>INGERSOLL</b> TENNIS CLUB EST 2018</p>	 <p><b>LAFAYETTE</b> GARDENS TENNIS CLUB EST 2012</p>	 <p><b>MARCY</b> TENNIS CLUB EST 2010</p>	 <p><b>TOMPKINS</b> TENNIS CLUB EST 2011</p>	 <p><b>SUMNER</b> TENNIS CLUB EST 2014</p>	 <p><b>JACKIE ROBINSON</b> TENNIS CLUB EST 2015</p>
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# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear KCTL Friends,

**What an incredible year: 2021 brought our community of students, families, volunteers and staff back in full swing – in-person and on-court, playing tennis and learning from each other! Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall, our students joined us each week with racquets in hand and smiles on their faces.**

This was KCTL's biggest year ever, serving over 500 children living in and around Brooklyn's public housing. Engagement and retention are increasing, with more students continuing in the program over many years and doubled participation levels across a wide range of year-round programming. And we continue to extend the KCTL Pathway for our impressive older students as they take on leadership roles in the program and prepare for their next big life chapters.

The heart of Kings County Tennis League has always been the positive energy that comes from the shared efforts

of such a dedicated community. We're proud to see it grow with new partnerships bringing new students to experience the transformative power of play, practice and perseverance.

I am pleased to share this annual review and thank you for your support in sparking the potential of so many deserving children.

Warm regards,  
**Nora Ryan**  
*Executive Director*

## OUR MISSION

Kings County Tennis League combines tennis and education to spark the potential of children living in and around Brooklyn public housing.



## BRINGING TENNIS TO THE KIDS

KCTL's unique model of bringing tennis clubs to where youth live intentionally draws resources to underinvested public housing and directly targets discrepancies in wealth, income, access to parks and play space, access to quality sports

instruction, gender gaps in sports, and under-resourcing of the community. By providing KCTL's play opportunities at public housing sites, children living in and around the developments are playing together, dismantling the stereotypes associated with public housing. Areas that previously excluded neighbors are now becoming spaces of universal belonging, where youth and families from diverse backgrounds throughout the entire neighborhood can play, socialize, and form relationships.

## OUR VISION

KCTL envisions every child in Brooklyn public housing engaged in healthy exercise and stimulating activities to develop their fullest potential.

KCTL uses tennis and off-court educational activities as instruments for youth development. We remove the physical and financial barriers to tennis by renovating or creating courts on underused play spaces and bringing our staff, volunteers, equipment and programs directly to where our students reside. KCTL cultivates each child's strengths while helping develop skills, values and relationships for future success.

# KCTL AT A GLANCE

**534**

Total Students Served

**374**

KCTL students, ages 5 - 18

**160**

Pre-K children, ages 3-4



BROOKLYN KINDERGARTEN SOCIETY  
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SINCE 1891

**96% BIPOC**

**68%** African-American/Black

**11%** Hispanic/Latinx

**4%** African-American/Black & Hispanic/Latinx

**4%** White/Caucasian

**13%** Other  
(Asian, Native American, Middle Eastern)

**45%**

Household annual income below \$39,500

**45%**

Summer Core students are NYCHA public housing residents

**100+**

Volunteers

**6** Sites

**1400+**

Hours free tennis & education programs



**GROWING PARTICIPATION**

50% New students

**GREATER RETENTION**

1/3 Students participate 3+ years



## Positive Youth Development

Outcomes are measured through Hello Insight student surveys

**97%**

Feel coaches take the time to understand them and their lives outside the program

**95%**

Say they're supported to learn from peers and teammates

**89%**

Report they're encouraged to participate no matter how good they are in the sport

**84%**

Say their coaches let them know they have something important to offer the team or group



# A YEAR IN REVIEW

## WINTER INDOOR

Weekly,  
January -  
March



**87**  
STUDENTS

**135**  
STUDENTS



## SPRING AFTERSCHOOL

Twice weekly,  
April -  
June

## SUMMER CORE

Saturdays,  
June -  
September



**246**  
STUDENTS

**116**  
STUDENTS



## FALL AFTERSCHOOL

Twice weekly,  
September -  
November

## GO GIRL GO!

All-girls clinic  
twice weekly,  
June -  
September



**41**  
STUDENTS

**48**  
STUDENTS

## SEMI PRIVATES

Small group  
lessons,  
Year-round



**42**  
STUDENTS

## UPSWING ACADEMY

For KCTL's most  
committed  
students,  
Year-round



## BUDDY PROGRAM

Mentorship  
pairing  
students with  
volunteers,  
Year-round

## VOLUNTEERS- IN-TRAINING

Older students  
assist in  
instruction, role  
models for  
younger children,  
Year-round



**15**  
STUDENTS

**160**  
STUDENTS



## BROOKLYN KINDERGARTEN SOCIETY

Weekly for Pre-K  
children at all BKS  
sites in NYCHA  
developments,  
April - October

# MORE PROGRAMS, MORE STUDENTS, GREATER ENGAGEMENT

2021 was a year of growth and expansion for Kings County Tennis League. Delivering over 1,400 hours of free youth tennis & education, KCTL offered a lineup of 10 in-person seasonal programs throughout the year. With almost double the level of student engagement, 374 individual students participated, the majority in 2 or more programs.

Programming expanded to support a wider age range across a broader spectrum of younger and older students. In partnership with Brooklyn Kindergarten Society, KCTL programs engaged 160 Pre-K children. We further extended the Pathway to serve older youth, who have a desire to stay tied to our inclusive community and are major contributors as role models and young leaders. KCTL served 534 Brooklyn youth at 6 KCTL sites and 7 BKS locations!

Propelled by dozens of staff and over one hundred volunteers who are passionate about the sport and about sharing it with children who would not otherwise have access, KCTL uses tennis as a vehicle for students, regardless of ability, to learn about themselves, their peers, and how their actions and choices affect those around them – important lessons for growth and achievement both on and off the court.

Tennis is an ideal and highly effective medium for positive youth development. KCTL staff and volunteer coaches are trained to incorporate proven youth development practices to boost social and emotional learning. Research shows that young people with strong SEL skills are more college- and career-ready, and experience better mental health and social functioning.







## MEET AJ, KCTL Volunteer-in-Training Age | 16

“THE BEST MOMENTS OF THE SEASON WERE WHEN I WAS TEACHING THE 4, 5 AND 6 YEAR OLDS. NOW I SEE WHAT THE COACHES SAW WHEN I WAS YOUNG.”

## VOLUNTEERS-IN-TRAINING

**With increased retention, there is an expanding cohort of older students growing up in the program over 5-6-7+ years, stepping up to be role models and leaders. The Volunteers-in-Training program offers students ages 13 - 18 the opportunity to lead and coach the youngest students, learning coaching skills, discovering the joy of having a hand in someone else’s success, and enjoying additional play with senior KCTL coaches.**



Since joining KCTL as a 9 year old in 2015, AJ has become one of KCTL’s most experienced and advanced players. His work ethic, grit, and determination have fueled his success on court, while his perseverance and sportsmanship have earned him much recognition over the years. Year-round, he spends six days a week on court practicing, competing, and oftentimes volunteering to mentor our younger kids. He is a favorite among the youngsters, and a star on his high school tennis team. AJ is a true role model who gives back at KCTL to ensure younger children from his community can find their own passions and pursuits through tennis.



## NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Despite the emergence of the extraordinary tennis talent of professional BIPOC players including Arthur Ashe, the Williams sisters, Coco Gauff and Frances Tiafoe, Black and Brown players are still under-represented.

But KCTL youth are sparking a change each time they step on the court to practice their serves and put away their volleys, with every tournament and every high school team they join.

KCTL takes every opportunity to show our young players that they are represented in this sport, encouraging them to set their goals high and dream big, infusing confidence in their growing abilities and innate promise.



**Twelve of our GoGirlGo! Students met one of their tennis heroes, Naomi Osaka,** thanks to our amazing supporters, Laureus Sport for Good Foundation and BodyArmor. Throughout the afternoon, Naomi answered questions from students, joined them on-court for a tennis clinic, and inspired each and every one of our students to keep practicing and never give up on their dreams!

**KCTL student Kelham presented trophies at the US Open to the Women's Doubles Champions and Finalists:** Shuai Zhang, Samantha Stosur, Coco Gauff and Charlotte Mally. KCTL is a proud member of the USTA Foundation's National Junior Tennis and Learning (NJTL) Network, and our longstanding partnership allows our students incredible opportunities.



**KCTL students AJ and Jonathan played doubles with Rohan Bopanna, ATP World Doubles #40, and Nick Monroe, ATP World Doubles #90.** Speaking at the KCTL event, all four players reflected on the importance of tennis in their lives and bonded over the transformative power of play. AJ and Jonathan shared how participating in KCTL's immersive programs, interacting with caring staff and volunteers, and knowing they are valued members of this inclusive community has given them the confidence and fortitude for what lies ahead.



**Racquet Magazine and Adidas joined KCTL for a community day.** Students from all 6 Summer Core sites gathered at Marcy Playground for a day of tennis and played with U.S. WTA star Katrina Scott!





**MARISELLE FIALLOS**  
AGE 13

“While being at KCTL, tennis has taught me to have a positive attitude even when things are going extremely horrible. Before KCTL I used to let my negative emotions take over me but I’m more positive now.”

“**HEAR FROM THE STUDENTS**”

“During my time with KCTL, I learned that it’s important is to try and learn from my mistakes.”



**RAMZI JORDAN**  
AGE 8

“I learned that you have to be able to hit the ball and return to your original spot. I think this has taught me to stay focused even after I do something.”



**KATELYNN ESPINOSA**  
AGE 11

“My goal is to be a good tennis player and to get good enough to be a coach one day, like the ones I had in the summertime.”

**GRACE CULLERT**  
AGE 10



“Tennis is a good sport that girls and boys can play. I want to become pro and be one of the best!”

**MADISON CHUNG**  
AGE 5



**NOUR  
SOUDANI**  
AGE 10



“This year in KCTL I learned that even through COVID and we had to do tennis virtually, it was still fun. And when we returned to the court, it felt like we got over a big obstacle.”

“My favorite time of the day is hurrying off to tennis. I started out a few years ago with KCTL and I enjoy every moment of tennis. My parents could not afford to pay for tennis lessons. Thanks to everyone who made it possible.”

**CODY  
WALKER**  
AGE 13



“On KCTL days, I leave my home at a certain time so that I’m 15 minutes early”.

**JANELLY  
MEJIAS**  
AGE 13



**DARNELL  
YATES**  
AGE 13



“I like going to tennis because it is fun, engaging and it allows me to meet other people. I don’t really go outside where I live unless it’s for tennis with KCTL. When I go to tennis I have a great time, I interact with friends and I am safe. When I go to the program, then I’m happy.”

“On KCTL days, I excitedly wait to go. I love tennis and I also can’t wait to see my friends. I am learning the court and the rules of tennis – also how to work as a team, especially in doubles.”

**RAZAN  
JORDAN**  
AGE 7



When it’s KCTL day, I feel happy because I get to play tennis and see my coaches. Tennis helped me play some games in gym better. It also helped me teach my family how to play tennis.”

**ROBERT  
MIDGETTE**  
AGE 10



# EXPANDING THE PATHWAY

**In 2022 the KCTL Pathway is expanding to include college access, paid jobs & workforce readiness programs to support our older students as they prepare for their next big chapters.**

The groundwork was set in 2021 with new partnerships:



With funding from the USTA Foundation, the Winward Academy is providing college test prep for 8th - 12th grade participants.

## Bottom Line

Bottom Line will guide high school students through the college application process with group workshops and one-to-one personal advisory services.



**JOBS**

Thanks to a generous grant from The Ichigo Foundation, the KCTL Student Jobs program will employ our most senior students as paid Site Assistants, beginning with the Summer Core program.

**Because of your support, we celebrate the success of our students at every step along the KCTL Pathway – from the youngest bravely taking on a new challenge to the oldest preparing to step confidently into the world.**

## MEET GABBY,

KCTL 2021 Breakpoint Award Winner

Age | 13

**“KCTL TAUGHT ME TO PERSEVERE AND WORK HARD AS A PERSON. I WANT TO TRY HARD TO GET AS GOOD AS THE OTHER PEOPLE THAT I PLAY WITH.”**



Gabby joined KCTL in 2018. Over the past three years, she has transformed from a shy girl to a leader off and on the court – even becoming the captain of her middle school tennis team. She participates in every KCTL

program available to her, including the Buddy Program which matched her with mentors, Emma and Alexis. Emma describes Gabby as “a funny, determined, kind young woman, on and off court, whose potential is boundless.” An exceptional role model for the entire KCTL community, Gabby is winner of the 2021 Breakpoint Award, KCTL’s most prestigious annual recognition that demonstrates the true leader she is in the KCTL community.

# FINANCIALS

## Revenue

Foundation & Corporate Grants \$223,774	Events \$174,487	Individual Giving \$132,596	Govt & Contractual Services \$31,090	<b>Total</b> <b>\$561,947</b>
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## Expenses

Program Services \$268,041	Management, Development and General \$262,624	<b>Total</b> <b>\$530,665</b>
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Net Assets – Beginning of Year \$246,381	Net Assets – End of Year \$277,663	<b>Operating Gain</b> <b>\$31,282</b>
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# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

USTA Foundation  
 USTA Eastern  
 New York Community Trust / Heisman Trophy Youth Development Fund  
 Ichigo Foundation  
 Youth INC  
 Laureus Sport for Good NYC  
 Brooklyn Communities Collaborative  
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