

April 8, 2012

Dear David Wendt & the Mid Atlantic Tennis & Education Foundation:

Thank you from all of us at Rock Creek Valley Elementary School in Rockville, MD! We have thoroughly enjoyed our tennis racquets, soft balls and net! During one P.E. class, I had the pleasure of overhearing a 4th grade student say, "This is the best gym class we've ever had!" As a true fan of the game of tennis, that made my heart soar!

I am a speech-language pathologist at RCV Elementary. It is at this wonderful school that we bus in about 70 deaf and hard of hearing students each year from all over the county to learn from our staff of teachers of the deaf, speech therapists, audiologists and mainstream classroom teachers. Many of these students take a very long bus ride each day to attend our program, where they learn English and participate in as many programs as we can provide, in order to develop their language skills. RCV also has a large number of low-income and non-English speaking families from the Rockville and Aspen Hill area. This tennis equipment has touched the lives of so many in need. Most of the children have never picked up a tennis racquet or been on a tennis court. It has been amazing to see the smiles come from the equipment that you have provided.

I have worked this year, in conjunction with another speech pathologist and the physical education teacher, to set up the net for specific gym classes and teach the children forehand and backhand strokes, as well as the basics of the game. Tennis has been an amazing avenue to teach vocabulary, work on speech articulation, build sentence structure, and promote strong communication skills. Of course, the children are also working on teamwork, physical strength, hand-eye coordination and many other physical components, without even knowing it.

Thank you for providing our school with such a tremendous gift. Please enjoy the pictures. You can see by their smiles that tennis has become a favorite activity at Rock Creek Valley!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Kiker', followed by a long horizontal line.

Stephanie Kiker, M. Ed., M.S., CCC-SLP
Speech Language Pathologist
Auditory Communication Specialist at RCV ES