



**USTA/Midwest Section
Strategic Plan
2012 - 2015**

As of August 1, 2011

"To Promote, Develop, and Service the Game of Tennis."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
II.	MISSION STATEMENT	1
III.	CORE VALUES.....	1
IV.	STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS	2
V.	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES.....	3
VI.	APPENDIX.....	6

I. INTRODUCTION

This strategic plan sets forth the mission, core values, goals, objectives, and strategic priorities of USTA/Midwest Section. Additionally, the strategic plan includes strategies for accomplishing our priorities and the criteria for determining whether the implementation of the strategic plan is successful.

The mission, core values, and strategic priorities permeate the actions we will take and the thought processes behind every activity of the Association. These elements contained in this strategic plan and coupled with the current integrated operating plans will guide all decision-making, and are evidence of the USTA/Midwest Section's commitment to achieving its mission.

II. MISSION STATEMENT

The USTA/Midwest Section's mission is: ***"To promote, develop, and service the game of tennis"***.

III. CORE VALUES

The core values of the USTA/Midwest Section constitute the fundamental beliefs of the organization. While goals present a clear direction, core values serve as our compass.

Accountability

In pursuit of its mission, the USTA/Midwest Section volunteers and staff accept responsibility for their actions in achieving the mission and for reaching the strategic goals of the Association.

Diversity and Inclusion

The USTA/Midwest Section actively seeks all people to play, watch, support, and/or enjoy the game of tennis through its events, programs, membership, leadership, and activities on a non-discriminatory basis, and makes diversity and inclusion an embedded part of the USTA/Midwest Section.

Governance

The USTA/Midwest Section, as a volunteer-based association with its constitutional authority residing in its District Associations, is committed to a governance and delivery structure that fosters appropriate and effective participation by, and input from, all organizational levels of the Association.

Integrity

The USTA/Midwest Section is committed to making all decisions, and operating and conducting all general business, events, programs, and services at all levels of the Association free of conflict of interest and consistent with the highest principles of ethical behavior.

Lifestyle

The USTA/Midwest Section is committed to the promotion, growth, and development of tennis as an enjoyable, lifetime sport that contributes to good health, character, and responsible citizenship.

Organizational Excellence

The USTA/Midwest Section is committed to excellence and is dedicated to improving in all areas focusing on: member services, human resources, programming, internal business operations, financial independence, and in the utilization of technology.

Teamwork

To accomplish its mission the USTA/Midwest Section works as a team of volunteers and staff at all levels of the Association.

IV. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS

The USTA/Midwest Section is impacted by internal and external factors which directly and indirectly affects the Association. By highlighting these factors the Association can determine how to work in conjunction with, around, and through these issues to achieve its mission.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
- Financial stability resulting from a consistent revenue source and prudent fiscal management of existing assets - Skilled professional staff and volunteers - Districts provide an established delivery system - Established and successful junior, collegiate, and adult programming - Ability to implement and maintain strong programming for juniors, collegiate players, and adults - Sectional leadership on national committees - Midwest Youth Tennis & Education Foundation - Grassroots marketing - Continuous improvement in USTA technology - Western and Southern Open and US Open Sectional Qualifier in Cincinnati 10 and Under Tennis Initiatives and rule changes - Good relationships with industry partners - Governance policies and procedures - Local delivery system - Training and education - Increasing organizational recognition of the benefits of age specific courts, equipment, and programming	- Not all Districts are providing a complete delivery system - Insufficient reserves at the Section level - Lack of volunteer utilization, especially with the Tennis Volunteer Corps - Difficult to measure the Association's exact impact on non-USTA programs - Full-time staff is not available in all Districts - Tennis professionals resisting and/or not adopting new techniques and philosophical concepts - Lack of diverse revenue sources and reliance on USTA national as the only major source of funding - Limited outreach to diverse participation, industry and vendor support	- Improve the delivery system - Increase participation and membership growth - Leverage strategic relationships - Continue to improve internal and external communications - Increase brand awareness among the general population - Increase penetration levels in membership and participation in relation to the Midwest's population - Enhance and create efficiencies in organizational structure to improve consistency, continuity, and adoption of goals, objectives, and initiatives throughout the Association - Leverage the USTA 10 and Under Initiative to reach a larger number of children - Public and private facility development of 36' and 60' courts - Utilize and develop time and task specific functions to engage and benefit from the Tennis Volunteer Corps - Implement the recommendations from evaluations and analyses of program effectiveness - Increase the number of teaching professionals in training workshops. - Continue collaborative planning with the Districts - Expose a more diverse population to all aspects of tennis and the Association	- Aging population, membership, and volunteer base - Migration of population due to economic and retirement opportunities - Population choosing not to play tennis or invest due to financial resources - Competition for consumer attention - Catastrophic events affecting the US Open and tennis participation - Member-based organization that generates insufficient membership revenue to operate programs at current level - Interruption of USTA funding to the Sections - Decline in tennis facility infrastructures and programs within the geographic boundaries of the Association - Lack of capital reinvestment in tennis facilities - Community-based organizations may find it more difficult to raise operating funds due to economic conditions - Shortage of tennis instructors - Teaching professionals who continue traditional approaches to teaching tennis and are resistant to change - The Association not adhering to policies, procedures, rules, and regulations

V. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

Strategic priorities, goals, and objectives have been identified and are listed below in alphabetical order, with the exception of diversity and inclusion. Diversity and inclusion has been listed as the initial strategic priority as a visual and tangible reminder that we shall be open and inclusive as we progress toward the accomplishment of all of our organizational initiatives.

Primary Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Objectives

1. DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Ensure that diversity and inclusion are embedded in every aspect of the Association. Diversity is the collective mixture of all of the characteristics, similarities, and differences that make each of us who we are. Inclusion is leveraging the power of diversity in a respectful environment that encourages all to participate and contribute to further the mission of the USTA/Midwest Section.

- 1.1 Increase diversity and inclusion among players, providers, volunteers, and staff
- 1.2 Provide diverse programs and training camps that will increase efforts to identify outstanding young athletes and create educational opportunities that will strengthen strategic partnerships
- 1.3 Heighten and increase awareness of the Association among diverse communities and populations
- 1.4 Actively promote and support the development of new and existing programs and training opportunities for players as well as professionals and volunteers in USTA Wheelchair Tennis

2. ADULT TENNIS

Support and fortify the success of adult programs by promoting, developing, and administering all adult recreational and competitive opportunities to maintain and expand adult participation, the number of unique players, playing opportunities, and adult membership.

- 2.1 Increase USTA League participation and unique players
- 2.2 Expand USTA Tennis on Campus team and individual participation in the Conference League, USTA Tennis on Campus Programs, and USTA Tennis on Campus Championships
- 2.3 Grow the Start/ReStart program
- 2.4 Increase the number of adult tournaments and events with a focus on NTRP tournaments and alternative formats
- 2.5 Provide better customer service for all age divisions by improving tournament and league operations

3. COMMUNICATION

Create awareness of all programs, initiatives, and participation opportunities through a combination of internal and external communications.

- 3.1 Ensure that a communications strategy exists within all programming and events
- 3.2 Expand media relations to receive greater media coverage
- 3.3 Promote the community tennis initiatives through public relations
- 3.4 Communicate effectively with the volunteers and staff
- 3.5 Provide a vibrant, up-to-date website experience for end users
- 3.6 Maintain the USTA/Midwest Section's historical information

4. COMMUNITY TENNIS

Grow tennis participation, community tennis programming, and improve the tennis facilities infrastructure throughout the Association.

- 4.1 Increase the number of registered CTAs
- 4.2 Create, develop, and strengthen new and existing infrastructures and delivery systems by targeting facilities, park and recreation associations, schools, teaching professionals, tennis organizers, and programs
- 4.3 Build strong collaborations with local communities, allied organizations, and local providers
- 4.4 Actively promote and support the development of new and existing programs and training opportunities for players as well as professionals and volunteers in USTA Adaptive Tennis

5. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT / PEOPLE RESOURCES / STRUCTURE

Maximize the utilization and deployment of all USTA/Midwest Section resources and expertise for financial and human resource development, monitoring, planning, and forecasting.

- 5.1 Develop and schedule ongoing training to refresh, educate, and sensitize volunteers and staff throughout the Association about appropriate means, methods, and best practices in the governance and conduct of the Association in the fulfillment of the mission
- 5.2 Utilize program metrics and financial reports to monitor the health and progress of the Association
- 5.3 Continue to strengthen the bond between the USTA/Midwest Section's volunteers, staff, and Districts to deliver the overall objectives of the Association
- 5.4 Strengthen the Association's organizational and operational efficiencies
- 5.5 Ensure compliance with all government regulations and adherence to the Association's policies and regulations
- 5.6 Continue to offer and expand, as necessary and requested, direct services to the Districts from the USTA/Midwest Section in the areas of financial reporting and planning, human resource management, and general administration

6. JUNIOR TENNIS

Encourage and enhance junior participation through the USTA/Midwest Junior Tennis Pathway.

- 6.1 Provide a strong base of programs to build awareness for 10 and under participation
- 6.2 Dynamically support 10 and under play and competition at the Section, District, and local levels
- 6.3 Increase the number of junior tournaments and events for all age divisions
- 6.4 Provide better customer service for all age divisions by improving tournament operations
- 6.5 Provide High Performance programs and training camps to identify outstanding young athletes and create educational opportunities that will strengthen strategic partnerships with Midwest coaches
- 6.6 Create additional USTA Jr. Team Tennis programs and increase USTA Jr. Team Tennis unique players

7. MARKETING

Increase the brand recognition of the Association, its programs, and its activities to support the growth of tennis participation in the USTA/Midwest Section.

- 7.1 Increase the awareness of USTA/Midwest Section programming
- 7.2 Ensure that a marketing strategy exists for all programming and events
- 7.3 Promote the community tennis efforts of the Association
- 7.4 Develop strategic partnerships to promote tennis to large established audiences
- 7.5 Create and distribute relevant collateral materials to support programs and events

8. MEMBERSHIP GROWTH & RETENTION

Increase individual and organizational memberships at a rate that exceeds the other sixteen USTA Sections.

- 8.1 Promote the concept and educate players and the public that a USTA membership helps support the tennis community and grows tennis programming
- 8.2 Develop strategic partnerships to increase the perceived value of a USTA membership to current and lapsed members
- 8.3 Implement strategies to increase USTA memberships

VI. APPENDIX

Definitions:

1. **Association** means the USTA/Midwest Section and all of its Districts.
2. **Community Tennis** strives to grow tennis at every level of the Association with a goal of making the game accessible to everyone. It supports a wide range of programs designed to help people learn the game, play the game and benefit from its many health/fitness and social benefits.
3. **Diversity** is the collective mixture of all of the characteristics, similarities, and differences that make each of us who we are.
4. **Inclusion** is leveraging the power of diversity in a respectful environment that encourages all to participate and contribute to further the mission the USTA/Midwest Section.
5. **Midwest Youth Team Tennis**
6. **Programming** refers to all tennis activities, training, events, tournaments, play days, and leagues that the Association offers to its membership.
7. **Start/Restart** is an entry-level adult program created by the USTA/Midwest Section to introduce, or reacquaint people to the sport of tennis in an easy to learn format.
8. **SWOT Analysis** is a strategic planning method used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in a project or in a business venture. It involves specifying the objective of the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieve that objective.
9. **Tennis Volunteer Corps (TVC)** is a pool of tennis volunteers who may eventually ascend to formal committee assignments or other leadership opportunities by providing volunteer opportunities that are flexible and vary in scope, duration, and format that align to individual skills, interests, and time availability.
10. **Unique Player** refers to a person who participates in a league, tournament, or other event at least one time and is counted only once in the Association's dashboard.
11. **USTA Adaptive Tennis** promotes and develops recreational tennis opportunities for individuals with differing abilities and circumstances through inclusion, knowledge, and support, and by providing adaptive programming, equipment, and teaching techniques. Adaptive tennis is characterized by modifications and adaptation of rules, equipment, court size, game /play objectives to accommodate any age, environment, condition, or disability so that everyone can have fun and enjoy the benefits of playing tennis safely and successfully.
12. **USTA Adult League Tennis** is organized, competitive team play for women and men age 18 and older of all abilities and experience. Teams are made up of a minimum of five to eight players depending upon the division. Teams and matches are set up according to NTRP rating so players will compete against other players of similar abilities.
13. **USTA Jr. Team Tennis** brings children together in teams to play singles, doubles and mixed doubles against other teams. It promotes social skills and important values by fostering a spirit of cooperation and unity, as well as individual self-growth. Also, it's a fun environment for children in which they learn that succeeding is really more about how they play the game – win or lose.
14. **USTA Tennis on Campus** program is designed to provide college students with opportunities for team camaraderie, social networking, and rivaled competition through tennis without the rigors of a varsity program. Perfect for athletes who have chosen not to

make the jump from high school to college varsity, Tennis On Campus offers co-ed team-based play, regional and national championship competition, and helps students maintain active and healthy lifestyles through their college years.

15. **USTA/Midwest Section Junior Tennis Pathway** is a developmental conduit for junior tournament players from ages 5 to 18 that provides a clear understanding of the appropriate equipment, balls, court size, and scoring to be used as they grow and develop their tennis skills.
16. **USTA Wheelchair Tennis** is a competitive sport with the same rules as “stand-up” tennis, except the wheelchair tennis player is allowed two bounces of the ball. The wheelchair is considered part of the body. All applicable rules of tennis, which apply to a player’s body, apply to the wheelchair. Wheelchair tennis players must have a medically diagnosed permanent mobility related physical disability, resulting in a substantial or total loss of function in one or more lower extremities. Wheelchair tennis players can also play in any type of USTA tennis program for able-bodied players, including tournaments, leagues, etc., still following the two bounce rule.
17. **10 and Under Tennis** enables children to begin playing much sooner so they can learn the strategy and tactics of tennis. Using the QuickStart Tennis play format, shorter, lighter racquets, slower and lower-bouncing balls, smaller court dimensions and modified scoring all address the immediate success, pleasure and progress of the youth playing tennis.