

Elevating the Women & Girls in Tennis Landscape

Back in March, USTA Florida took a significant step forward in promoting gender equity within the sport by revealing its [Women in Tennis Research](#) and expanding its Women in Tennis Initiative. This effort aimed at creating more opportunities for women and girls in tennis through targeted programs, coaching opportunities, and a commitment to equity principles.

Since then, USTA Florida has actively implemented these changes, making strides to increase participation and support for women and girls at all levels of play. These efforts are reflected in all-girls camps, where two have already happened, and more are planned.



Inspiring the Next Generation of Women Leaders

On May 5, USTA Florida teamed up with long-time partner, Love Serving Autism (LSA), to host a special All-Girls Camp. This event focused on inclusivity, placing a particular emphasis on girls with autism and unique abilities. The camp provided a safe and supportive environment for these girls to learn and enjoy tennis, demonstrating USTA Florida and LSA's commitment to making the sport accessible to everyone.

Later in the summer, in August, USTA Florida and UTR Sports collaborated to host their Third Annual All-Girls Camp

at the University of North Florida (UNF). This camp offered girls a unique opportunity to learn from and interact with the UNF Women's Tennis team, as well as receive mentorship from established women in the sport. The experience not only enhanced their tennis skills but also provided valuable insights and inspiration from female role models.



At these camps, participants proudly wore t-shirts designed by women in the sport, Monica Toledo and Erin Weiffenbach. Monica's "Equal Tennis Game" design and Erin's "Tennis Love" artwork have become symbols of the initiative's goals. These shirts have been distributed at all camps and women's coaching training sessions.

In October, USTA Florida will be hosting some more camps, with one scheduled to take place at the USTA National Campus. There is also another one set at one of Florida's Historical Black College and University, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU). FAMU has played a massive role in Florida's tennis history as the legendary Althea Gibson, graduate of FAMU, inspired many young girls to get involved in tennis.



Expanding Coaching Opportunities for Women

USTA Florida's commitment to promoting women in tennis

extends beyond players and includes coaching as well. The organization has hosted several women-specific training sessions, providing valuable resources and support for female coaches, with more planned this year.

Coming this fall, USTA Florida is excited for its Women, Wine, and Wheelies training. This is an all-women adaptive tennis training open to any women that want to give wheelchair tennis coaching a try. Participants will earn USPTA and PTR Credit and become community coaches. There will be two dates, with one happening at the Racquet Club of Cocoa Beach on October 12 and another at the Winter Park Tennis Center on October 19.





One person, Jennifer Johnson, a new Community Coach, has been through the Community Coach program and loves to see women-only aspects being implemented.

"I attended the All-Women adaptive training last summer with my daughter Morgan, who is also a certified coach," she said. "It was an amazing experience to network and collaborate with other women coaches. Sharing it with my daughter was even more meaningful."

Jennifer wants to see more women involved because of the different view women bring to the sport. "Women coaches bring a unique perspective and experience," Jennifer added.

"We are all a team, and it takes everyone's effort to coach that team, no matter what the age of the player. You are never too young, or old, to grow yourself in the game and more importantly, to grow the game of tennis."



Following her participation in the Community Coach Program, Jennifer hosted a training of her own, where she helped train 20 community coaches at the YMCA of Collier

County.

USTA Florida's expanded Women in Tennis Initiative is making a meaningful difference, providing more play opportunities and fostering a supportive community for women and girls in tennis. As these programs continue to grow, the future of women in tennis looks brighter than ever, promising greater inclusion, equity, and success for all.



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