



PRESS RELEASE

USTA HONORS COLUMBUS REGIONAL TENNIS ASSOCIATION AS COMMUNITY TENNIS ASSOCIATION OF THE YEAR

ORLANDO, FLA., Oct. 16, 2017 – The USTA has announced that the Columbus Regional Tennis Association in Columbus, Ga., was selected as the Community Tennis Association of the Year. The organization was honored at an awards luncheon involving community tennis leaders during the annual Next Generation Workshop, Oct. 13-15, at the Renaissance Orlando at Sea World in Orlando, Fla.

The Columbus Regional Tennis Association (CORTA), formerly known as the Columbus Tennis Patrons, was originally founded in 1952 to help contribute money to the building of the original 12 courts at Cooper Creek Tennis Center. After the completion of this goal, the organization became dormant. In 1990, due to the growth of tennis in the area, the Patrons reorganized. Together with the Columbus Parks & Recreation Department, the Patrons helped expand Cooper Creek to a 20-court facility, making it one of the largest public clay-court facilities in the south at the time. During this expansion phase, the Patrons raised more than \$250,000 through private donations to build the current clubhouse and the eight lower courts. After years of fundraising and hard work, the goal was complete; the grand opening of the new tennis center was held in June 1993.

Currently, CORTA functions as a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion, development and support of tennis in the region. Through programs, tournaments and other organized events; CORTA has been able to support a rather remarkable variety of tennis activities. Since the fall of 1994, the association has grown from 120 members to more than 2,300.

In 1999, CORTA was involved in a joint endeavor with the city of Columbus to build arguably the premier public clay-court facility in the United States. The project at Cooper Creek Tennis Center, already a recipient of the USTA's Outstanding Tennis Facility Award, added an additional 10 courts to include a stadium court and additional improvements to the existing 20-court facility. CORTA raised approximately \$1.2 million dollars in conjunction with the City's \$600,000 to complete the \$1.8 million project.

In a continuing effort to improve Cooper Creek Tennis Center, CORTA partnered with the city in 2010 to refurbish the now-30-court complex. CORTA contributed funds for 30 tons of clay, new brooms, line sweepers and water coolers. In 2006, CORTA purchased 7.98 acres adjacent to Cooper Creek Park for future expansion. In 2014, CORTA partnered with Columbus State University (CSU) and the city of Columbus to build 12 hard courts, 9 rubico courts, four 60-foot courts and a building to house the CORTA office and CSU Tennis program. This new addition opened to the public in October 2016.

"The Columbus Regional Tennis Association defines what it means to be a great CTA," said Kurt Kamperman, USTA Chief Executive of Community Tennis. "For 65 years, CORTA has worked tirelessly to introduce tennis to the masses and they continue to develop programs for all ages and abilities for all current and future tennis enthusiasts. We are proud to honor the organization's leaders and many volunteers with this well-deserved award."

The USTA CTA of the Year Award was established in 2002 to honor a CTA for outstanding service in growing and developing the sport of tennis in its community. The award recipient is selected from 17 nominees, one from each of the USTA sections, by a panel of USTA Community Tennis Association Development Committee members.

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The USTA is the national governing body for the sport of tennis in the U.S. and the leader in promoting and developing the growth of tennis at every level -- from local communities to the highest level of the professional game. A not-for-profit organization with more than 715,000 members, it invests 100% of its proceeds in growing the game. It owns and operates the US Open, one of the highest-attended annual sporting events in the world, and launched the US Open Series, linking seven summer WTA and ATP World Tour tournaments to the US Open. In addition, it owns approximately 90 Pro Circuit events throughout the U.S. and selects the teams for the Davis Cup, Fed Cup, Olympic and Paralympic Games. The USTA's philanthropic entity, the USTA Foundation, provides grants and scholarships in addition to supporting tennis and education programs nationwide to benefit under-resourced youth through the National Junior Tennis & Learning (NJTL) network. For more information about the USTA, go to USTA.com or follow the official accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat.

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