



**USTA Southern**  
5685 Spalding Drive  
Peachtree Corners, GA 30092  
  
Telephone: 770.368.8200  
Fax: 770.368.9091  
info@sta.usta.com  
[southerntennis.com](http://southerntennis.com)

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Mary Hatfield to be Inducted into Southern Tennis Hall of Fame**

### **LONG-TIME VOLUNTEER ALSO WORKED AT USTA SOUTHERN**

**ATLANTA – September 13, 2018** – The Southern Tennis Foundation and USTA Southern announced today three tennis luminaries are scheduled for induction into the 2019 class of the Southern Tennis Hall of Fame.

Mary Hatfield, of McDonough, Ga., is a highly-regarded volunteer on the national, sectional, state and local levels, along with formerly working for USTA Southern.

Others to be inducted are Julie Ditty, of Louisville, Ky., who reached a world ranking of No. 89 in singles and No. 65 in doubles, and Gordon A. Smith, of Atlanta and New York, who served as USTA Southern president and is currently USTA executive director and CEO. They are scheduled to be inducted January 19, 2019, during the Lucy Garvin Southern Tennis Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, in Atlanta.

Established in 1977 with the induction of Bitsy Grant and Ham Richardson, the Hall of Fame will grow to 107 members after the induction ceremony. Other notable members include Stan Smith, Chanda Rubin, Roscoe Tanner, Linda Tuero, Gardner Mulloy and Lucy Garvin. The [Southern Tennis Foundation's](http://SouthernTennisFoundation.org) website contains information on the hall, inductees and its charitable mission. The hall is located in the USTA Southern offices in Peachtree Corners, Ga.

### **Mary Hatfield Exacting Professional & Volunteer**

Mary Hatfield has come full circle. She started in the USTA family as a volunteer, moved into the office as a staffer, and is now back giving her time as a committee chairman.

In all those roles – paid and unpaid – Hatfield excelled as a consummate professional.

Beginning in her local community, Hatfield made contributions on the state, sectional and national levels.

A resident of McDonough, Ga., Hatfield spent the early part of her career in the classroom, teaching middle school. Away from school, her volunteer energy was concentrated in developing the Macon Tennis Association's (MTA) presence in the community. She was instrumental in focusing the MTA and other community tennis associations (CTA) on delivering a variety of tennis program. Also, she encouraged USTA Southern to mentor CTAs.

She was the recipient of three MTA awards: the Fred Hill Community Service Award, the Official of the Year Award and one accolade that is named for her – the



Mary Hatfield Spirit of Tennis Award. The Macon Convention and Visitors Bureau recognized her with two awards: the Macon Believer Award and the VIP Award.

Randy Stephens, a former USTA Southern President & CEO and 2014 Southern Tennis Hall of Fame inductee, spoke about Hatfield's contribution to their community: "Mary was the first paid employee of the Macon Tennis Association. I believe she was paid \$100 a week, which meant she made about 10 cents an hour! She professionalized the way community tennis associations should be run – a true trailblazer for CTAs across the country. Mary's contributions to the growth of tennis in Macon were tremendous and we will always be grateful to her. Being inducted into the Southern Tennis Hall of Fame is an honor well deserved."

Tapped to help on a statewide basis, she served on five USTA Georgia committees, chairing the USTA Adult League and Community Development committees. She served on the Board of Directors for six years, rising to President and Secretary.

In a 2014 interview, Hatfield told this story about running a junior tournament: "I remember getting reamed out by a father because we ran out of parmesan cheese. It was kind of funny because it must've been in the latter '90s because he was going to send a letter to the president of the Georgia Tennis Association. I handed him my card so he would have my address ... since I was the president. Then, for weeks afterwards, every time I turned around somebody was bringing me these little packages of parmesan cheese as a joke."

Hatfield was honored with five USTA Georgia awards: Ruth Lay Award, Community Service Award, Tournament Director of the Year, League Coordinator of the Year and Educational Merit Award.

USTA Southern also relied on her expertise. She was named to the USTA Southern Board of Directors as a Delegate at Large. She was the chair of the State Presidents and Community Development committees, and also served on the USTA Adult League Committee. She is the recipient of the section's Jacobs Bowl (its highest honor), Gerrie Rothwell and Educational Merit awards.

On the national level, Hatfield was honored with the USTA Eve Kraft Community Service Award. She has served as Community Development Chairman, along with being a member of the Junior Recreation Committee.

For 11 years, Hatfield worked in the USTA Southern junior department with Bill Ozaki and Sandy Hastings, completing a troika of veteran Southern junior experts. She retired in 2013. Originally, she was tasked with overseeing the use of TennisLink in the section. Recounting the hiring process, Hatfield said the USTA Southern Executive Board wanted Executive Director & COO John Callen "to hire somebody that would be helping our people with [TennisLink] customers, etc. and the committee told him to go find somebody. Two weeks later he called me."

Later she was assigned to promote a program that was one of her great passions: Junior Team Tennis.

Hatfield is now hard at work again, once more as a volunteer. Based on her years of heading the program, she chaired the USTA Georgia Junior Team Tennis Committee before being named to the similar position as the USTA Southern Junior Team Tennis Committee Chairman and the Grants Subcommittee Chair. Currently she volunteers on Georgia's Adult League Committee.

She noted, "I enjoy playing [USTA] League tennis. Since retiring I've served as captain of two or three teams a season. Of all the awards, the greatest accomplishment to me is the friends I've had the opportunity to make.

In his nomination of Hatfield, Hastings wrote, "Off court, both professionally and personally, Mary sought to live a life of high standards and, as a result of that, in working with her, you too were held to that high standard. She was not content in achieving at a lower standard and would not settle for those who worked with her to do so either. When you sat down to discuss an issue with Mary, through her personal understanding of how to correctly address a situation and how it should be handled, you came away more knowledgeable and a better person. Her continual efforts in encouraging you to properly manage the multitude and variety of situations propelled each of us who worked with her to a higher professional level."

Hastings' tribute echoes many who worked with Hatfield throughout her tennis career.

## Mary Hatfield, Georgia, 2019

- Honored with the USTA Eve Kraft Community Service Award
- Recipient of the USTA Southern Jacobs Bowl (its highest honor), Gerrie Rothwell and Educational Merit awards
- Honored with five USTA Georgia awards: Ruth Lay Award, Community Service Award, Tournament Director of the Year, League Coordinator of the Year and Educational Merit Award
- Developed the Macon Tennis Association's presence in the community, an example of an outstanding local organization for other CTAs in the country
- Named to the USTA Southern Board of Directors as a Delegate at Large
- Chaired the USTA Southern Junior Team Tennis Committee Chairman, USTA Southern Grants Subcommittee and the USTA Georgia Junior Team Tennis Committee
- For 11 years, Hatfield worked in the USTA Southern junior department as the Manager of Junior Team Tennis & TennisLink

###

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. It owns and operates the US Open, the largest annually attended sporting event in the world, and launched the **Emirates Airline US Open Series** linking seven summer tournaments to the US Open. In addition, it owns about 90 Pro Circuit events throughout the U.S., and selects the teams for the Davis Cup, Fed Cup, Olympic and Paralympic games. A not-for-profit organization with more than 655,000 members, it invests 100 percent of its proceeds in growing the game. It is divided into 17 sections, of which **USTA Southern** is the largest. The 160,000+ USTA members living in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee make up USTA Southern, and account for nearly 25 percent of the total USTA membership. A professional staff housed in Peachtree Corners, Ga., carries out USTA Southern's daily operations, but policy is formed and much of the organization's work is executed via a board and committee structure of more than 200 volunteers. For more information about the types of programs and services offered by USTA Southern, visit [www.southerntennis.com](http://www.southerntennis.com).

###

### Media Contact:

Ron Cioffi, USTA Southern

W: 770-368-8200 x112

C: 770-378-7856

[cioffi@sta.usta.com](mailto:cioffi@sta.usta.com)