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## PRESS RELEASE

# USTA Southern Arthur Ashe Essay Winners Selected

### YOUNGSTERS VISIT WINSTON-SALEM OPEN, MEET PLAYERS

**ATLANTA – August 26, 2016** – Eight youngsters from USTA Southern were selected as section winners of the 2016 NJTL Arthur Ashe Essay and Art Contest.

Sponsored by USTA Southern, the Southern Tennis Patrons Foundation and USTA state offices within the section, the winners and chaperones received all-expense paid trips to the Winston-Salem Open in North Carolina where they interacted with top-ranked tennis players and experienced a behind-the-scenes tour of the ATP World Tour event.

The youngsters had an official autograph and photograph session with Atlanta's Donald Young. They also met many other players including Kevin Anderson, Frances Tiafoe and Albert Ramos Vinolas. Two youngsters were selected to perform pre-match coin tosses during the day session. Additionally, the essay winners were featured on court prior to the PowerShares Legends match between James Blake and Mark Philippoussis.

The Winston-Salem Open is held on the campus of Wake Forest University and is the final men's tournament of the five-week Emirates Airlines US Open Series.

Writers of the winning essays, including hometown and NJTL, are:

- Sapir Blain, of Birmingham, Ala. (James Lewis Tennis Scholarship Foundation NJTL)
- Preston J. Lawson, of Atlanta (Coach Wink's NJTL)
- **Chase O'Daniel, of Louisville, Ky. (Rising Stars of Kentucky)**
- Saige LaCour, of Harvey, La. (A's & Aces)
- Tierney Holmes, of Greenwood, Miss. (Greenville CTA/NJTL)
- Brittany Beickert, of Shawboro, N.C. (Outer Banks Tennis Association)
- Tyzell Richardson, of Charleston, S.C. (Lowcountry Youth Tennis Association)
- Denisha Hankins, of Memphis, Tenn. (Tennis Memphis)

This year's contest commemorates the spirit and humanitarian work of the late, great Arthur Ashe by asking NJTL participants (18 years old and under) to learn about Althea Gibson and then respond by writing a 350-word or less essay answering the question: How have your skills in tennis impacted the development of your character and how you address your personal challenges on and off the court?

Founded in 1969 by Arthur Ashe, Charlie Pasarell and Sheridan Snyder, the National Junior Tennis & Learning (NJTL) network is a nation-wide group of youth development organizations seeking to develop the character of young people through tennis and education. Supported by the USTA Foundation, NJTL chapters serve more than 225,000 children each year, thanks to the efforts of more than 500 nonprofit organizations which provide free or low-cost tennis, education and life skills programming to under-resourced children throughout the U.S.

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