

# KCTA 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

The fiscal year that ended September 30, 2021 was a challenging but successful one. This was our 55<sup>th</sup> year of operation, but our first during a worldwide pandemic. We were unable to support tennis activities for approximately one year beginning in March, 2020. While KCTA continues to support our community in a number of ways, our focus the past three years has been on high school student athletes who cannot afford the proper equipment. Enabling these young people and giving their coaches the tools they need provides them access to the many physical, social, and academic benefits that come from participating in one's high school's athletic program.

High school sports returned on a limited basis in the spring of 2021, but we elected not to do a full-scale equipment distribution because both the seasons and rosters were severely restricted. We did make spot donations where the need was extreme. We welcomed the opportunity to support a return to near normal with the girls' season this fall. KCTA delivered a coaches' clinic that was attended by 21 coaches from 15 high schools. We hosted 150 players for drills, lunch, and our first-ever "shopping spree" where we distributed 500 articles of gently-used tennis clothing. This season's equipment distribution delivered 220 racquets, 190 pairs of shoes, 40 bags, and 5,000 practice balls to the student athletes at 24 high schools – our largest donation yet.

We were able to expand our reach to address another need for the first time. In addition to lacking proper equipment, many student athletes from low-income families do not have access to proper instruction. Partnering with the local clubs and their teaching professionals, we were able to provide scholarship lessons. This summer, more than 80 athletes received 5 – 10 small group lessons from local pros. The feedback was very positive, and we have enrolled another 50 athletes this fall.

For many years, KCTA has recognized one senior girl and boy for their outstanding sportsmanship. We enhanced that recognition this year by dedicating the awards to two local tennis icons – the girls' to Tracy Macnair Burrell and the boys' to Hank Pfister. Their engagement adds stature to the awards. We also elected to acknowledge the many students who are setting fine examples by formally recognizing finalists for these awards.

Fundraising has been a challenge – three of our four key events were cancelled due to COVID in 2020, and that was again the case in 2021. That was partially offset by our participation in Give Big Kern, a community philanthropy day, for the first time. The tennis community supported us in a big way, and our donations ranked in the top 20 out of more than 130 non-profit organizations. Coupled with continued aggressive pursuit of new sponsors, we have built our base to more than 60 donors. It is this support that has enabled us to sustain the high level of equipment donations and to begin offering free instruction.

Looking forward, we have one fundraiser planned for November, 2021 and a full calendar in 2022. We intend to build on our Give Big Kern success and continue to pursue new corporate sponsors. That additional funding will be necessary. A key to our success has been all volunteer labor and a generous supply of used equipment from our tennis community. However, the scale of our operation is only possible through partnerships with key retailers who have given us access to their returns and overstocks. Due to worldwide supply chain issues, the availability and cost are both challenges. As a result, we expect our equipment costs to increase by as much as \$10,000 (more than 50%) in 2022.