



MISSOURI VALLEY  
ST. LOUIS

## 2025 Award Criteria

Below are the detailed award criteria for the annual awards presented to our USTA St. Louis players, providers and leaders. You can submit as many nominations as you would like here: [2025 USTA St. Louis Nominations](#). Supporting information is extremely useful to the committee and will further your candidate's possible selection as an award recipient. Unless otherwise noted, all nominees must be current USTA members. Additional comments or questions should be sent to director@ustastl.com.

All nominations MUST be received before **midnight on September 1, 2025**.

We are hosting an Awards Dinner on Saturday, November 16, at the LiUNA Event Center, located at 4532 S. Lindbergh Blvd., Sunset Hills, MO 63127. Award dinner reservations will begin on September 15 (link to be provided). All are welcome, we hope you will join us. Thank you for your interest in USTA St. Louis awards!

### PLAYER AWARDS

#### **ADULT PLAYER OF THE YEAR** (2 males/2 females)

- Two levels for this award will be recognized:
  - Player ranked 4.0 and above
  - Player ranked 3.5 and below
- Recognition of adult players who participate in USTA League tennis or USTA tournaments
- Criteria are based on performance, current accomplishments, sportsmanship and the promotion of tennis in general, raising the standard of play to its highest level
- Please list all 2024 accomplishments that highlight the nominees' career, including ranking
- Must not have a Code of Conduct report on file in the last 12 months (refer to the Suspension Points Record in Serve Control)
- Must be a current USTA member

#### **JUDY DIPPOLD JUNIOR PLAYER (S) OF THE YEAR** (1 male/1 female)

- Junior Player(s) of the Year award is based primarily on high performance results at USTA St. Louis, USTA Missouri Valley and USTA National tournaments
- Equally important is sportsmanship and a demonstration of raising the game to its highest level; the player should exhibit participation in the highest level of competition offered by USTA
- Please list for 2024 all accomplishments that highlight the nominees' career; emphasis should be placed on the last 12 months, but previous performance could also be considered; high performance results and accomplishments can include:
  - A high national ranking
  - A high sectional ranking
  - Placing at a National Championship or the Summer or Winter L3
  - Invitation to participate in special camps or events
- Must not have received a Code of Conduct for last 12 months
- Must be a current USTA member

## **EMERGING JUNIOR PLAYERS OF THE YEAR (1 male/1 female)**

- Recognition of a junior player who participates in USTA Team Challenges, USTA Junior Team Tennis or other events, such as USTA Junior Circuit, on a regular basis
- Recipients should demonstrate good sportsmanship and are developing a lifelong love for the game
- An emerging junior player is not actively playing in section-level tournaments, maybe not even L5
- These players may show promise to be high-performance players, but may also just be actively playing in WTN Match Play, WTN Tournaments, Junior Team Tennis, Junior Circuit, and Team Challenges
- Must be a current USTA Member

## **JUNIOR SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD**

- The USTA St. Louis Junior Sportsmanship award is given to a male and female junior player in each age group, boys and girls 10s, 12s, 14s, 16s and 18s who best exemplifies the finest qualities of sportsmanship in competitive play including tournaments, USTA Junior Team Tennis and USTA Junior Circuit events
- Good sportsmanship is an essential element of all junior sports and junior development
- The junior player is ineligible if he or she has a Code of Conduct on file in the last 12 months
- Leadership off the court is a bonus; examples could include taking on leadership opportunities or volunteering in the community or with the organization
- The nomination must have a minimum of two instances (in detail) where the nominee exemplified the finest qualities of sportsmanship on and/or off the court (quotes from officials, coaches, parents or players are acceptable)
- Must be a current USTA Member

## **TENNIS FAMILY OF THE YEAR**

- Recognition of the family who in recent years has done the most to promote amateur tennis - primarily on a volunteer basis
- Ideally, all nominated members of the family should participate in some way, either as players or by running programs or tournaments or in junior development activities
- The family must be active in volunteering in some or all of the following:
  - Serving as a volunteer in fostering tennis at any level of the USTA such as national, section, district and/or local board or committee, tournaments and adult and/or junior programs
  - Developing and/or sustaining junior and adult programs
  - Holding office(s) at any level of the USTA
  - Volunteer coaching
  - Competing in tennis, including any youth program or tournament, high school, Tennis On Campus or college varsity, tournaments (include age category rankings), USTA League or other organized play, including social/recreational
  - Enriching the game of tennis in other related activities (i.e., non-tennis activity, honors and/or achievements)
- Please include the years of service for each activity for each nominated family member
- All family members listed in the nomination must be current USTA Members

## **PROVIDER/CONTRIBUTOR AWARDS**

### **FACILITY OF THE YEAR**

- Recognition will be awarded to one individual outstanding tennis facility under the jurisdiction of:
  - A parks and recreation department
  - An educational institution
  - Non-profit entities
  - Private and/or commercially owned and operated facilities with USTA and other 'growth of tennis' programs
- Criteria to be considered when nominating a facility are:
  - Quality of each court area and surface
  - Quality of the court enclosure and lighting
  - Overall layout and adaptation to the site
  - Accessories and amenities, especially encouraging the following of medical protocol for personal sanitation
  - Evidence of good and green maintenance
  - Quality Net Generation tennis guidelines met
    - Includes red to orange to green to yellow programs
    - Host Junior Circuit events
    - Host Junior Team Tennis teams
    - Facility has blended lines or permanent 36' or 60' courts
- Completed Serve Tennis registration of programs
- Tennis programs held should include:
  - USTA programs
  - USTA Junior Competitive Pathway
  - Other tennis-related programs
  - Important contributions to the game of tennis
- Must be a current USTA Organization Member

### **MEMBER ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR**

- Recognition of outstanding service by one individual USTA St. Louis Organization
- Service and impact to the community
  - Donating facilities for amateur tournaments of all types
  - Providing courts for free clinics or seminars for the general public
  - Providing facilities for interscholastic play for high school and college tennis
  - Providing facilities for USTA programs (tournaments, Leagues, High Performance, etc.)
  - Allowing promising non-member juniors the use of the courts
  - Taking an active role in section or district affairs
  - Allowing use of facilities for special events (e.g., charities, wheelchair, etc.)
  - Involvement and support of diversity and inclusion initiatives and programs
  - Allowing use of facilities for section or district events or training
- Service to organization's members which demonstrates support of the USTA Mission and may include the following:

- Maintaining an active tennis program including:
  - Tennis ladders, other recreational programs including intersectional/interorganizational play
  - Adult and junior tournaments in various categories, especially USTA sanctioned
  - Encouraging and promoting play in USTA Leagues and USTA Junior Team Tennis
  - Net Generation related programs, Schools Tennis and NJTL programs
  - Adaptive tennis programs
  - Senior initiatives
- Maintaining effective systems for keeping membership informed of USTA section and district tournaments and activities and of pertinent changes in USTA and sectional rules and regulations
- Encouraging and assisting junior players
- General service to the game of tennis
  - Activities that promote and strengthen tennis within the member organizations and in the community
  - Activities promoting the benefits of individual membership in the USTA
- Must be a current USTA Organization Member

## OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY TENNIS ASSOCIATION

- A USTA Community Tennis Association (CTA) is defined as: “Any incorporated, geographically defined, not-for-profit, volunteer-based tennis organization that supports or provides programs which promote and develop the growth of tennis;” the organization must be an incorporated, tax-exempt association
- Please describe in detail how the CTA meets the following criteria categories:
  - CTA history, CTA leadership, CTA mission, strategic plan, organizational structure, program offerings based on community needs, volunteer recruitment, community partnerships, fundraising, marketing and PR plans, staff positions, special recognitions
- Must be a registered USTA CTA, a current USTA Organization Member, and the main CTA provider must be Safe Play approved

## OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTOR TO YOUTH TENNIS PROGRAMS

- The award is given to an **individual** (not a facility or academy) that is providing a full-service USTA Junior Competitive Pathway
- Criteria to consider:
  - Programs are registered on PlayTennis.usta.com
  - Promotes USTA Junior Competitive Pathway within their program
  - Organizes USTA Team Challenges
  - Organizes USTA Junior Team Tennis teams or programs
  - Organizes USTA Junior Circuit events
  - Partners with schools for in school/after school tennis
- Recommended: Individual is certified with either organization (USPTA or PTR), and is current on their education and dues, and is in good standing with the certifying organizations
- Bonus factor: Registered Net Generation School Partner
- Must be Safe Play approved
- Must be a current USTA Member

## **OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTOR TO YOUTH HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAM**

- The award is given to an **individual** (not a facility or academy) that has done the most to advance High Performance programs
- The nominee has assisted in searching for new talented junior players and is involved with Team USA camp
- Recommended: Individual is certified with either organization (USPTA or PTR), and is current on their education and dues, and is in good standing with the certifying organizations
- Junior successes to be considered include:
  - Players with high national rank
  - Players making it to the Quarters and beyond in national USTA and ITF tournaments
  - Players are top finishers in top section events (Level 3 USTA Missouri Valley)
  - Players who earn sportsmanship awards
  - Players who are invited to regional and national camps
- Bonus factors:
  - Completed a USTA High Performance program
  - Give back by coaching section or National Team Events, or volunteering at community events
- Must be Safe Play approved
- Must be a current USTA Member

## **USTA JUNIOR TEAM TENNIS ORGANIZER**

- This award will be presented to one USTA Junior Team Tennis (JTT) organizer who has helped expand an existing USTA JTT program or has developed a new USTA JTT program.
- Criteria to consider:
  - Successfully implemented or helped expand local USTA JTT programs
  - Served as a district/local coordinator or coach/manager within a USTA JTT program
  - USTA JTT program must be listed in TennisLink
  - Successfully implemented other USTA tennis programs
  - Generated interest in USTA JTT programs through local advocacy
  - Creatively and effectively utilized section and or national funding
  - Sponsorship development – ability to find and utilize resources other than the USTA
  - Number of participants in USTA JTT programs
  - Current Safe Play and Complete Coach profile on USTA.com
- Must be a current USTA Member

## **OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTOR TO LEAGUES (1 male/1 female)**

- This person has made significant contributions to the USTA League Tennis program as a volunteer in multiple aspects of leagues
- Nominee has participated on teams, assisted in the promotion of the program, assisted in the administration of leagues and/or volunteered at section championships
- Recipient should demonstrate good sportsmanship and a love of the game
- Please provide years of service, type of service provided, community activity, and documented information showing how, through their efforts, the league player experience has been enhanced,

program was developed and implemented, and/or has increased league participation or retention in the district

- Must not be anyone who receives a stipend or monetary remuneration
- Bonus factors: long-time service, and participation on section or district committees
- Must be a current USTA Member

## **OUTSTANDING ADULT TOURNAMENT**

- An outstanding USTA sanctioned adult tournament will include most of the following criteria:
  - Excellent tournament organization
  - Fair and proper seeding
  - Fair and equitable scheduling
  - Adequate staffing for tournaments (referees and umpires, monitors, desk staff and other volunteers)
  - Encouraged sanitation protocol for use of personal amenities such as water, ice, towels as well as social distancing methods
  - Information dissemination, the use of technology to improve tournament
  - Good site conditions with adequate indoor backup if needed
  - Multiple matches and/or creative formats (e.g. 1-day tournaments)
  - USTA Missouri Valley regulations and contract requirements followed
  - Rules and regulations followed as outlined in current *Friend at Court*
  - Effort to promote and reward good sportsmanship
- This award will not be given to an adult section-level event that is run by USTA Missouri Valley staff

## **OUTSTANDING JUNIOR TOURNAMENT**

- An outstanding USTA sanctioned junior tournament will include most of the following criteria and must not be a section level (L3 or L4 or L5) event:
  - Excellent tournament organization
  - Fair and proper seeding
  - Fair and equitable scheduling
  - Adequate staffing for tournaments (referees and officials, monitors, desk staff, other volunteers)
  - Encouraged sanitation protocols for use of personal amenities such as water, ice, towels as well as social distancing methods (if required)
  - Information dissemination, the use of technology to improve tournament
  - Good site conditions with adequate indoor backup if needed
  - Applicable rules and regulations followed
  - Efforts to promote and reward good sportsmanship
- Please include details on what distinguishes this event as an outstanding tournament (number of participants, exemplary use of Serve Tennis, organization of volunteers, tournament survey results, etc.)

## **OUTSTANDING OFFICIAL**

- The USTA St. Louis officials' award shall recognize dedication, service, responsiveness, and technical proficiency
- It shall be based upon a reputation for a high standard of officiating and providing appropriate leadership, on and off the court, in the pursuit of officiating excellence
- The official shall have worked substantially at district/section/amateur USTA events, be a positive role model, and be supportive and involved in grassroots programs and events
- A referee certification is highly desirable
- The USTA database will be used as the source of the current work record; the recipient shall be selected in consultation with the St. Louis Association of Tennis Officials (SLATO)
- Bonus factors:
  - Officiating at high school, college, and/or professional events, in addition to a substantial number of district/section/amateur USTA events
  - Successful recruitment of new officials
  - Longevity as an official
  - Serving on an officials committee

## **LEADERSHIP AWARDS**

### **HIGH SCHOOL COACH OF THE YEAR**

- Recognition of a high school coach for nominee's work during the 2023-2024 season as a coach who meets the following criteria:
  - Supports and promotes USTA programs
  - High school teams had a record of success in win-loss and/or in improvement of players
  - Develops players' physical, mental and emotional abilities and promotes development;
  - Maintains high ethical and sportsmanship standards
  - Promotes a passion for tennis in the team, school and community
- Please include in the nomination one to two specific examples of how the nominee promotes play and supports USTA programming outside of the high school
- Must currently be coaching a team (not retired)
- Must be Safe Play approved and/or the state or school equivalent
- Bonus factors
  - Coaches registered through the Team Coach registration on USTA.com
  - Individual is certified with either organization (USPTA and PTR), and current on their education and dues, and be in good standing with the certifying organizations

### **MARY VASSAR ADULT SPORTSMANSHIP**

- Recognition of an adult for nominee's outstanding sportsmanship in the 2024 championship year; good sportsmanship is an essential element of all adult sports
- The adult player is ineligible if he or she has a Code of Conduct on file in the last 12 months (refer to the Suspension Points Record in Serve Control)
- Leadership off the court is a bonus; examples could include taking on leadership opportunities or volunteering in the community or with the organization
- Must be a current USTA Member

## **OUTSTANDING DIVERSITY ACHIEVEMENT**

- Given to an outstanding USTA St. Louis program leader, athlete, organization or administrator for success in providing outreach to the diverse tennis community
- This award may include NJTL chapters and/or leaders
- This award is presented to an individual or organization that has championed the cause for diversity both on and off the tennis court
- Through hard work, persistence, and unwavering dedication, the nominee has helped to expand the image of tennis to be inclusive of diverse populations
- Other considerations are demonstrating a high degree of organizational ability, success in serving all players in the area, quality off and on court programs, management structure, and involvement with the tennis community

## **DISTINGUISHED SERVICE**

- Distinguished Service award recognizes outstanding, long-time performance, dedication and accomplishment of an individual's effort in district level service to USTA St. Louis and/or section level service to the USTA Missouri Valley
- Criteria to consider:
  - Outstanding and sustained service to the sport through active participation, advocacy, or leadership at the district and/or section level, in a manner consistent with the highest standards of the field; these standards may be met in a variety of ways, including activity that involves exceptional creativity, innovation, intellectual, moral courage and leadership
  - A willingness to work with others to improve the game of tennis
  - Candidate should have a minimum of 10 years of service to the district and/or section (e.g., long term service on district/section committees, chair or vice chair of a district/section committee, district and/or section board of directors)
- The award may be given posthumously
- Must be a current USTA member (does not apply posthumously)