



2025 Award Criteria

Unless otherwise noted, all nominees must be current members of USTA, must have participated in USTA Missouri events, and cannot be members of the USTA Missouri District staff.

All nominations are due no later than August 30 at 11:59 p.m. and are to be submitted via this form: [USTA Missouri 2025 District Award Nomination](#).

Player Awards

ADULT PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Two levels for this award will be recognized.

- 1) Player ranked 4.0 and above
- 2) Player ranked 3.5 and below

Adult Players of the Year award will be awarded to adult players who participate in USTA League tennis or USTA tournaments. Criteria is based on performance, current accomplishments, sportsmanship and the promotion of tennis in general, raising the standard of play to its highest level.

Please list by year or 2024 all accomplishments that highlight the nominees' careers, including ranking information.

ADULT SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

This award is an award given to a male and a female adult USTA league player who exemplifies the finest qualities of sportsmanship on and off the court. This adult player is ineligible if they have received a Code of Conduct grievance in the past 12 months. This player displays that they win with humility and lose with grace.

JUNIOR HIGH PERFORMANCE PLAYER(S) OF THE YEAR (1 female and 1 male)

Junior Player(s) of the Year award is based primarily on high performance results at USTA and USTA Missouri tournaments, sportsmanship, and a demonstration of raising the game to its highest level. The nominated player should exhibit participation in the highest level of competition offered by USTA.

Please list by year or 2024 all accomplishments that highlight the nominees' careers. 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 a Code of Conduct report on file in the last 12 months. Refer to the Suspension Points Record in TennisLink.

EMERGING JUNIOR PLAYER(S) OF THE YEAR (1 male and 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. Both recipients should demonstrate good sportsmanship and a love of the game. An emerging junior player is not actively playing in section-level tournaments, maybe not even an 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. As a result, they are developing a lifelong love for the game of tennis.

JUNIOR SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

The USTA Missouri Valley Junior Sportsmanship award is given to a male and female junior player in each age group, boys and girls 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18's who best exemplifies the finest qualities of sportsmanship in competitive play

including tournaments, USTA Junior Team Tennis and Junior Circuit events. Good sportsmanship is an essential element of all junior sports and junior development.

The junior player is ineligible if they have a code of conduct on file in the last 12 months. Refer to the Suspension Points Record in Serve Tennis.

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).

TENNIS FAMILY OF THE YEAR

This award is made annually to 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.

Criteria: The family must be active in volunteering in some or all of the following:

- 1) 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.
- 2) Developing and/or sustaining junior and adult programs
- 3) Holding office(s) at any level of the USTA
- 4) Volunteer coaching
- 5) Competing in tennis, including any youth program or tournament, high school, Tennis on Campus or college varsity, tournaments (include age category rankings), League or other organized play, including social/recreational
- 6) 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 (1) individual outstanding tennis facility under the jurisdiction of:

- 1) A parks and recreation department
- 2) An educational institution
- 3) Non-profit entities, or
- 4) 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:

- 1) Quality of each court area and surface
- 2) Quality of the court enclosure and lighting
- 3) Overall layout and adaptation to the site
- 4) Accessories and amenities, especially encouraging the following of medical protocol for personal sanitation
- 5) Evidence of good and green maintenance
- 6) Must be a current USTA Organization Member
- 7) Quality Net Generation tennis guidelines met
 - a. Includes red to orange to green to yellow programs
 - b. Host Junior Circuit events
 - c. Host Junior Team Tennis teams
 - d. Facility has blended lines or permanent 36' or 60' courts
- 8) Completed Serve Tennis registration of programs

Tennis programs held should include:

- 1) USTA programs
- 2) USTA Net Generation Junior Pathway
- 3) Other tennis-related programs
- 4) Important contributions to the game of tennis

MEMBER ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR

Recognition of outstanding service by one (1) individual USTA Missouri Valley Member Organization.

- 1) Service and impact to the community.
 - a) Donating facilities for amateur tournaments of all types
 - b) Providing courts for free clinics or seminars for the general public
 - c) Providing facilities for interscholastic play for high school and college tennis
 - d) Providing facilities for USTA programs (tournaments, Leagues, High Performance, etc.)
 - e) Allowing promising non-member juniors the use of the courts
 - f) Taking active role in section or district affairs
 - g) Allowing use of facilities for special events (e.g. charities, wheelchair, etc.)
 - h) Involvement and support of diversity and inclusion initiatives and programs
 - i) Allowing use of facilities for section or district events or training
- 2) Service to organization's members which demonstrates support of the USTA Mission and may include the following:
 - a) Maintaining an active tennis program including:
 - i) Tennis ladders and other recreational programs including intersectional/inter-organizational play
 - ii) Adult and junior tournaments in various categories, especially USTA sanctioned tournaments
 - iii) Encouraging and promoting play in USTA Leagues and USTA Junior Team Tennis
 - iv) Net Generation related programs, Schools Tennis and NJTL programs
 - v) Adaptive tennis programs
 - vi) Senior initiatives
 - b) 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
 - c) Encouraging and assisting junior players
- 3) General service to the game of tennis
 - a) Activities that promote and strengthen tennis within the member organizations and in the community
 - b) Activities promoting the benefits of individual membership in the USTA
- 4) Must be a current USTA Organizational Member

COMMUNITY SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Community service awards are given for recent significant contributions made to tennis development by individuals actively involved in teaching tennis through community centers, schools and parks, inner city or suburban programs.

Criteria to consider when nominating are:

- 1) Scope of program
- 2) Depth of involvement in community, e.g., impact on community's overall recreational picture
- 3) New and innovative features developed as a result of candidate's activities
- 4) Inspirational and motivational work with adults or juniors
- 5) Involvement of other recreational organizations such as the YMCA/YWCA, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc., in the establishment of a community oriented program
- 6) Association with the USTA Missouri Valley section and/or district
- 7) Must be a current USTA Member

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY TENNIS ASSOCIATION

A USTA Community Tennis Association (CTA) 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 and a current USTA Organization Member, and individuals within the CTA must be registered and Safe Play approved.

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTOR TO THE USTA LEAGUE TENNIS PROGRAM

This person has made significant contributions to the USTA League Tennis program as a volunteer in multiple aspects of leagues. The nominee has participated on teams, assisted in the promotion of the program, assisted in the administration of the 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 and community activity. 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 section.

Bonus factors: long-time service, and participation on section or district committees.

Must not be anyone who receives a stipend or monetary remuneration.

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:

- 1) Individual must be certified with either organization (USPTA or PTR), be current on their education and dues, and be in good standing with the certifying organizations.
- 2) Must be a current USTA Member
- 3) Individual is SafePlay approved
- 4) Programs are registered on PlayTennis.usta.com
- 5) Individual promotes USTA Junior Competitive Pathway within their program
- 6) Individual organizes USTA Junior Circuit events
- 7) Individual organizes USTA Team Challenges
- 8) Individual organizes USTA Junior Team Tennis teams or programs
- 9) Individual partners with schools for in school/after school tennis

Bonus factor: Registered Net Generation School Partner

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTOR TO YOUTH HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

This person has done the most to advance High Performance programs. The nominee has assisted in searching for new talented junior players, Net Generation programs, and involvement with Team USA camp. The individual must be certified with either organization (USPTA or PTR), be current on their education and dues, and be in good standing with the certifying organizations. This award is for an individual and not a facility or academy.

Junior successes to be considered include:

- Players with high national rank
- Players making it to the Quarters and beyond in national 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:

- Safe Play approved
- Completed a USTA High Performance program
- Give back by coaching section or National Team Events, or volunteering time at community events

USTA JUNIOR TEAM TENNIS ORGANIZER

This award will be presented to one USTA Junior Team Tennis Organizer who has helped expand an existing USTA Junior Team Tennis program or has developed a new USTA Junior Team Tennis program.

Criteria to consider when nominating are:

- 1) Successfully implemented or helped expand local USTA Junior Team Tennis programs
- 2) Served as a district/local coordinator or coach/manager within a USTA Junior Team Tennis program
- 3) Junior Team Tennis program must be listed in Tennislink
- 4) Successfully implemented other USTA tennis programs
- 5) Generated interest in USTA Junior Team Tennis programs through local advocacy
- 6) Creatively and effectively utilized section and or national funding
- 7) Sponsorship development-ability to find and utilize resources other than the USTA
- 8) Number of participants in USTA Junior Team Tennis programs
- 9) Current Safe Play and Complete Coach profile on USTA.com

OUTSTANDING ADULT/SENIOR TOURNAMENT

An outstanding sanctioned adult/senior tournament will include most of the following criteria:

- 1) Excellent tournament organization
- 2) Fair and proper seeding
- 3) Fair and equitable scheduling

- 4) Adequate staffing for tournaments (referees and umpires, monitors, desk staff and other volunteers)
- 5) Encouraged sanitation protocol for use of personal amenities such as water and ice, towels as well as social distancing methods
- 6) Information dissemination, the use of technology to improve tournament
- 7) Good site conditions with adequate indoor backup if needed
- 8) Multiple matches and/or creative formats (e.g. 1 day tournaments)
- 9) USTA Missouri regulations and contract requirements followed
- 10) Rules and regulations followed as outlined in current Friend at Court
- 11) Encouraged: sanitation protocol to reduce/prevent the transmission of communicable diseases (e.g., Covid-19)

This award will not be given to an adult district level event that is run by Missouri District staff.

OUTSTANDING JUNIOR TOURNAMENT

An outstanding sanctioned junior tournament will include most of the following criteria and must not be a section level (L3 or L4) event:

- 1) Excellent tournament organization
- 2) Fair and proper seeding
- 3) Fair and equitable scheduling
- 4) Adequate staffing for tournaments (referees and umpires, monitors, desk staff and other volunteers)
- 5) Encouraged sanitation protocol for use of personal amenities such as water, ice, towels as well as social distancing methods (if required)
- 6) Information dissemination, the use of technology to improve tournament
- 7) Good site conditions with adequate indoor backup if needed
- 8) Applicable rules and regulations followed
- 9) 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 technology, organization of volunteers, tournament survey results, etc.).

OUTSTANDING OFFICIAL

The USTA Missouri District Officials' award shall recognize dedication, service, responsiveness, and technical proficiency. It shall be based upon a high standard of officiating and providing appropriate leadership, on and off the court, in the pursuit of umpiring in the USTA Missouri District. The umpire shall have worked substantially at district/amateur USTA events, be a positive role model, and be supportive and involved in grassroots programs and events. A referee certification is desirable.

The USTA database will be used as the source of the current work record. The recipient shall be selected in consultation with the USTA Missouri Officials Committee Chair. However, an official who is working primarily ITA and/or professional events will not be considered for the award.

Bonus factor: Also officiating at high school, college, and/or professional events

Leadership Awards

LEAGUE CAPTAIN MENTOR OF THE YEAR

This award is given to a USTA League Player who recruits and guides new adult captains in player recruitment, team building, team management/scheduling, sportsmanship, and player retention. The nominee is familiar with TennisLink, Code of Conduct, tournament play, and opportunities available for player skills growth.

NEW LEAGUE CAPTAIN OF THE YEAR

This award is based on a USTA League player who has taken the initiative to participate in USTA League play as a first-time team captain. This award is given to the player based on their experience as a player as well as a captain who has demonstrated sportsmanship and strong organizational, social, and leadership skills. The nominee also demonstrates their passion for USTA tennis and its growth on and off the court.

HIGH SCHOOL COACH OF THE YEAR

Recognition of a high school coach for their work during 2022-2023 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 1-2 specific example(s) 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. Must be a current USTA Member or school must be a current USTA Organization Member.

Bonus factors: Coaches registered through the Team Coach registration on USTA.com; certified with either organization (USPTA or PTR) and be in good standing with the certifying organizations

OUTSTANDING DIVERSITY ACHIEVEMENT

Given to an outstanding USTA Missouri 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 **section level** service to the **USTA Missouri Valley**.

Criteria to consider when nominating are:

- 1) Must be a current USTA member.
- 2) Outstanding and sustained service to the sport through active participation, advocacy, or leadership at the district level of the USTA Missouri Valley, in a manner consistent with the highest standards of the field. These standards may be met in a variety of ways, including activity which involves exceptional creativity, innovation, intellectual, moral courage and leadership.
- 3) A willingness to work with others to improve the game of tennis.
- 4) Candidate should have a minimum of 10 years of service to the section (e.g., long term service on district-level committees, chair or vice chair of a district committee(s) section board of directors, advisor).
- 5) The award may be given posthumously.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD

To be defined and selected by the section president annually. Districts do not submit nominations for this award.