



MIDWEST

USTA/Midwest Section Advocacy Handbook





Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
1-2-3's of District Advocacy.....	5-6
Advocacy Agenda.....	8-15
Community Health Initiatives.....	16-17
Integrating Tennis with After-School & In School Programming.....	18-23
After School Program Case Studies	
Hamilton County Community Tennis Association – Hamilton County, IN.....	19
Milwaukee Tennis and Education Foundation – Milwaukee, WI.....	21
Midwest Section Facility Case Studies.....	24-31
Tennis facility projects	
Wilmington Area Tennis Association public facility – Wilmington, OH.....	24
Midland Community Tennis Center – Midland, MI.....	26
Howard County Indoor Tennis Center – Greentown, IN.....	28
Barbara S. Wynne Tennis Center – Indianapolis, IN.....	30
Collegiate Outreach.....	32-43
University of Illinois.....	33
South Bend, Indiana.....	34
University of Wisconsin Tennis on Campus.....	35
Why Colleges Engage in Community Outreach.....	38
Western Michigan University Case Study.....	42
Membership Density and CTA Location Maps.....	44-54
Architectural Renderings and Conceptual Designs.....	55-63
Sample Advocacy Presentation.....	64-85
Appendix and Additional Resources.....	86-88
Appendix A USTA/Midwest Section Advocacy & Grants Committee Members	
Appendix B List of Questions Used During Case Study Interviews	
Appendix C Thank You to Our Contributors	
Why Play Tennis?	
Economic Impact Information	



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A lifetime sport, tennis builds health and character for all who participate. From 10 & under beginners, to adult leagues, to professional competition, the United States Tennis Association strives to promote and grow the game. Our goal as advocates is to highlight the power and relevance of tennis, especially the construction and maintenance of public facilities, school programs, and collegiate tennis programs in order to enhance the climate for growth and equity.

As a result of this growing need, the USTA/Midwest Section Community Development Department and the Advocacy & Grants Committee set out to catalog successful projects through case studies from within the section. Entitled “The Big Serve’ Midwest,” this manual was developed because of the USTA/Midwest Section’s dedication and commitment to promote the growth and development of tennis. For a list of Advocacy & Grants Committee members, please see Appendix A.

The purpose of this manual is to provide assistance to communities with their tennis facility and program needs. This manual will serve as a road map to identify important elements that need to be considered in a facility-building or programming process. As a resource for information, and a knowledge base sharing the case studies with other districts, this manual will be useful when conducting similar projects.

Good Luck!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jay P. Hacker".

Jay Hacker
USTA/Midwest Section Advocacy & Grants Committee Chairperson

Introduction



The Big Serve Midwest Advocacy Handbook

“Tennis experienced the fastest growth in participation of any sport since 2000.”

-(March 2008, Sports Events Magazine).

If you're reading this handbook...you are an Advocate!

We hope this handbook will serve as a useful USTA/Midwest Section guide to Districts and Tennis Advocates. Our goal is to help you channel your resources and passion for tennis in the most effective way possible. With all of us moving in the same direction, assistance from the USTA/Midwest Section office will be readily available.

Please use the full resources of this manual when planning your advocacy projects. The items included can answer any question you may have. The contents include:

USTA/Midwest Section Guide to Districts & Community Tennis Associations (CTAs) – Helpful suggestions for District EDs and CTAs on how to successfully set up Advocacy Networks and step by step instructions on how to prepare for your advocacy project.

Case Studies of Successful Programs and Facilities – Interviews of facility owners/managers and program directors who have successfully brought tennis into communities

USTA/Midwest Section Membership Density and CTA location guide – Color coded maps indicating county specific density by State

National Advocacy Handbook - Step by step instructions on how to prepare for your advocacy project

Information from the National Recreation & Parks Association
Examples of community mobilization

Additional resources are available through the USTA National Advocacy Website:

www.usta.com/BigServe

On this site, you will find the **USTA National Advocacy Curriculum** containing step by step instructions and examples on how to advocate for your cause be it small, medium, or large, and as it applies to Facilities and Parks, After-school Partnerships and Programs, and Collegiate Community Outreach.

About the USTA

The mission of the USTA/Midwest Section is to “promote, develop and service the game of tennis,” focusing on the establishment of competitive, developmental, educational and recreational programs for individuals of all ages and skill levels without regard to race, creed, color or national origin. The USTA/Midwest Section also promotes health, character, fair play, sportsmanship and social responsibility through tennis.

Our goal is to provide successful programs and friendly, courteous service to our 14 District associations, our member organizations and our individual members. Currently, the Indianapolis-based USTA/Midwest Section exceeds 83,000 individual members and 1,000 member organizations. It is the second largest section of the United States Tennis Association, the National Governing Body for tennis in the U.S. The USTA/Midwest Section includes the following states: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, and portions of Kentucky and West Virginia.

The USTA/Midwest Section Strategic Plan for 2008-2011 includes the following priorities and goals: Financial and organizational excellence, tennis development and operations (adult tennis, junior tennis and community tennis), and membership growth and retention.

History – The USTA/Midwest Section (formerly Western Tennis Association) has a rich tennis history spanning over a hundred years. It was five years before the turn of the 20th century that the Western Lawn Tennis Association was founded on July 13, 1895, when about 20 of the leading tennis players in the Midwest came together at the Chicago Beach Hotel in Chicago, Illinois. It was at that now-historic meeting that the Western Lawn Tennis Association was formed. Initially, the Western Lawn Tennis Association (WLTA) governed all tennis clubs west of the Alleghenies, thus the "Western" name.

To provide opportunities and financial support to young tennis players through charitable activities, the Midwest Youth Tennis & Education Foundation (formerly Western Youth Tennis Foundation) was created in September 1992. The Foundation is an important presence for the future of tennis in the Midwest. Starting in 1999, the Foundation began awarding a scholarship in the name of former Midwest standouts Tim and Tom Gullikson. Thus far, more than \$240,000 has been given to individuals and \$167,000 to local community programs. By 2011, the Foundation’s vision includes providing \$250,000 annually in grants and scholarships to youth.

As we build the future of tennis and honor the history of our past, we are excited to have a new home. Construction of our 25,000 square foot office building by the Midwest Youth Tennis and Education Foundation was completed in June 2006. The new facility houses the Foundation, USTA/Midwest Section, and provides a new permanent home for the Midwest Tennis Hall of Fame.

THE 1-2-3s OF DISTRICT ADVOCACY

Teach your Tennis Service Representatives (TSRs), CTAs, and National Junior Tennis Leagues (NJTLs) to identify existing and potential projects

- City/County courts in need of repair or expansion
- Potential city/county park consolidation projects
- Are there one or two court facilities scattered throughout your city or town? Make an effort to consolidate those courts into one tennis hub and 'trade' the land for other uses.
- Tennis court projects contained in City Park Master Plans and individual parks
- Master Plans are available for viewing at every City Park Department.
- School districts where future schools have tennis court potential
- Check out the long range plans to see if courts are drawn into each upcoming school plan. If not, lobby the local School Board to include them.
- Planned Unit Developments that can support at least 4 or more tennis courts
- Check frequently with Planning & Zoning Departments for new developments being applied for. If they do not include tennis courts, lobby your Planning & Zoning Commission.
- Collegiate courts where community programs and partnerships can be formed
- Form partnerships with local colleges and bring forward the idea of after school programs for youth.

II. Form new and revitalize older CTAs in your District.

- Where there is new population growth and/or new projects are emerging
- Where business growth is developing
- Encourage inclusion of the following on all CTA Boards:
 - School or PTA Board Member
 - Local college representative or coach
 - City Parks Department representative
 - Local partnership organizations (YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, etc.)
 - NJTL Coordinator, if not already on the Board

III. District Plan of Action

- Request CTAs immediately create an Advocacy Specialist position.
- Immediately identify a District Advocacy Staff Liaison.
- Form a District Advocacy Committee.

THE 1-2-3s OF DISTRICT ADVOCACY

Create an Advocacy Specialist position within your CTA. This person can help your organization by forming immediate relationships with the following:

City/County Park & Recreation Manager

- Ask them to appoint a representative to serve on or be a board liaison.
- Familiarize yourself with your city's park master plan.
- Begin talking with staff about where tennis courts can fit into future projects.
- Keep CTA abreast of all potential tennis programming opportunities.

Council Members and/or County Commissioners

- Ask around about members and/or their families that may already play tennis. They will share your passion and be more willing to listen to your project plans.
- Offer to volunteer on council campaigns where you have an ear. Have your CTA hold a 'meet & greet' tennis social for council members to show off your membership numbers. Get all CTA members involved.

NJTL Chapters

- Ensure NJTL Leaders are kept abreast of potential project.
- Work together toward common tennis advocacy goals.
- Include NJTL representation in all presentations - kids make a huge impact on decision makers.

Community Outreach Organizations

- YMCAs
- After-school Alliances
- Boys & Girls Clubs

Your District/CTA Advocacy Staff Liaison

- Keep lists current of all projects so he/she can communicate to the USTA/Midwest Section
- Help find USTA/Midwest Section dollars for projects
- Can provide you with tools for presentation and programming examples

Starting a Project and Developing Successful Advocacy Programs

The manual is intended to serve as a resource for those individuals, organizations, CTAs, etc. that are interested in building or upgrading their public facilities, starting or re-shaping an after school tennis program, or partnering with collegiate varsity teams to enhance community tennis. The manual contains a variety of case studies from around the section, from 30 court high school complexes to park facilities; after school programs and successful college teams just recently being considered for elimination.

Each case study for each particular category was asked similar questions in an effort to provide a consistent and user-friendly format. This set of questions is located in Appendix B. The case studies have been grouped in the following manner: tennis facility projects, after school tennis programs, and collegiate outreach. Appendix C contains a list of those people who contributed case studies to this manual.

We wish you luck in turning your passion for tennis into a successful advocacy project and hope that this manual helps you attain your goals.

The overarching goal of the USTA is to have 30 million tennis players by the year 2010. Community Tennis strives to grow tennis at every level with a goal of making the game accessible to everyone through the largest new player initiative that tennis, or any other sport, has ever conducted. The goal of the USTA's advocacy initiative is to promote the benefits of tennis to new players and policy-makers to increase opportunities for all new, seasoned, or lapsed players.

The USTA/Midwest Section's advocacy initiative is led by the Community Tennis Development Department at the USTA/Midwest Section office. The department is charged with implementing the USTA's advocacy plan, which has three primary objectives: (1) the building and renovation of public tennis facilities, (2) the growth of tennis programming in the after-school setting and (3) the protection and growth of varsity tennis programs on college campuses. The way in which the USTA/Midwest Section has chosen to achieve these aims is to support the development and growth of a grassroots network of tennis advocates, who are organized by regional and local tennis organizations, passionate about the game and equipped to change the public policies in their communities that affect the growth of tennis facilities and programming.

Our Approach: Advocacy in the USTA/Midwest Section context involves taking our passion for, and knowledge of, tennis and connecting it to the needs of communities, schools, colleges, and local governments. Advocacy is the ability to demonstrate to decision-makers how our array of programs can benefit the community. The USTA/Midwest Section has invested time, money and talent into the notion that the growth and health of tennis requires coordinated and persistent engagement with public and private sector decision-makers.

This handbook will help you plan and organize effective grassroots advocacy efforts by providing you with worksheets, sample materials and case studies. You will find case studies of advocacy in action for:

- Public facilities and parks
- After-school programs
- Collegiate Tennis Community Outreach and Advocacy Efforts