



Brandon Tennis Association to be Recognized at the US Open

Members of the Brandon Tennis Association will be traveling to New York City this week to attend the US Open. On Friday, September 4th the Brandon Tennis Association will be recognized as the National Community Tennis Association of the Year. They received the award in February along with the invitation from USTA President, Lucy Garvey, to come to the Open.

“We are so thrilled to have this opportunity. We get to sit in the President’s box and have a wonderful view of the best tennis players in the world,” said Becky Blue, President of the Brandon Tennis Association who will be representing the BTA along with other board members; Tracie Rohlf, secretary, and Mark Schlekeway, coach of the Brandon Valley boys’ varsity tennis team.

The National Community Tennis Association of the Year award is given to one local group each year that has contributed to the growth of tennis in their community. “The BTA is a prime example of how a community can successfully come together to achieve a common goal,” said Kurt Kamperman, Chief Executive, Community Tennis, USTA. “The organization has shown great dedication and commitment in growing the game of tennis in Brandon.”

Working in cooperation with the Brandon City Council and school district to help make their vision a reality, the BTA spearheaded an effort to develop an eight-court tennis complex complete with four new tennis courts and an 800 square-foot welcome center.

Upon opening in June 2007, adult leagues and summer tennis opportunities for junior players were developed through Jr. Team Tennis programs. The new courts also allowed the Brandon School District to implement a no-cut policy for all of its after-school tennis programs. One indication of the BTA’s success is the marked growth of its summer youth tennis program from 45 participants in 2005 to over 200 players this past summer. This summer the BTA held its first sanctioned USTA Junior tournament with over 60 kids from three states participating.

“The USTA has been an amazing resource to us as we grow tennis in Brandon. It is because of the financial success of the US Open that grant funds are available to groups such as ours all across the country,” said Blue. “It will be an honor to be a part of this big event which ultimately contributes to our ability to provide tennis programming and facilities for kids and adults in Brandon.”

The US Open attracts passionate fans from all over the world as they come to witness the toughest tennis on the game's biggest stage. More than 720,000 on-site fans, 75 million television viewers in the U.S. and 30 million online visitors enjoy the thrill and excitement of the US Open each year. The one-of-a-kind experience and the magnificent grounds that have become synonymous with America's Grand Slam keep fans coming back year after year, making the US Open the highest-attended annual sporting event in the world.