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Capital Region Youth
Tennis Foundation

FALL 2010
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www.15LOVE.org

Program News

Healthy Cooking Classes Stir up at 15-LOVE

On Wednesday, October 20 over 20 participants and family members joined 15-LOVE Board members Nuhar Jaleel and Mary Jean Krackeler for our first healthy cooking class. Nuhar and Mary Jean put together a delicious quinoa wrap with turkey and/or salmon, feta cheese, avocado and miso dressing. The participants were able to help Nuhar and Mary Jean prepare this delicious meal and everyone had the chance to sit and enjoy it together. At the end of the dinner everyone was given the recipe to take home.

The healthy cooking class is just one of the many new programs that have started at 15-LOVE for the fall. We look to host one healthy cooking class a month for our participants and their families. Next for the healthy cooking class series will be healthy holiday baking night with board member Barbara Yake.

If you are interested in hosting a healthy cooking class contact Amber Marino at the 15-LOVE offices at 438-2039.

Record Breaking Numbers for the 2010 Summer Program!

HEAT ADVISORY! Those two words sum up most of the summer of 2010, quite the change from the record-breaking rain in 2009. The other record we broke was for overall attendance. We saw 1,864 participants this summer – beating our old record by 4! Our staff was amazing, comprised mostly of current and former participants, they survived the heat and kept the kids safe and having fun. One parent sent us a note, saying “I wanted to send you a note on how fantastic your program and instructors are. Each lesson I attended I never heard the instructors or kids complain about the heat, it was probably because they were having too much fun. This program was a great experience for my son and we are thrilled to continue in the fall.”

The Jamboree was held August 12 at Washington Park in Albany. The day is filled with tennis games, as kids travel from court to court competing for prizes. One of our Board Members, Barbara Yake, baked over 1,000 treats for our participants and we added a bouncy-bounce this year for the kids to enjoy (both huge hits!). An unexpected hit was a picnic table loaded with used books that had been collected by a volunteer, Tess Palladino, at Albany Academy a few years ago. The books were used mainly at our Book Power Clubs, but we had many leftover that were not necessarily at the right reading level for third graders, so we offered them to the kids at the Jamboree for free this year. We had no idea that this would be so popular. Kids lined up and labored over their decision of which book to take. The table drew kids over immediately and many asked if they could take more. They were all told very clearly only to take a book if they intended to read it, and out of about 300 kids, only one refused a book. Besides the books, the winners of our Art and Essay Contests were announced by Tulip Queen, Mishka Giles, and her Court. Many thanks to Mishka and her Court for judging the contests for us and being present to hand out the awards and take pictures with the kids. To end the day, kids are given a backpack provided by Stewart’s Shops and it’s filled with school supplies, funded by a grant from the Community Foundation for the Capital Region’s Standish Family Fund. To end a summer filled with great tennis, new friends, and always education and life skills, we bring kids from all over the Capital Region together for a day of great tennis, new friends and especially education and life skills.



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Denise McCoy Scholarship Recipients

We are proud to announce that 15-LOVE was able to provide scholarships to five recipients for the Denise McCoy Scholarship. Each participant has been involved with the 15-LOVE program for many years as a participant, instructor and volunteer. All are well deserving of this great scholarship.

The recipients of the Denise McCoy Scholarship are: Djuan Blackemore currently attending The College of Saint Rose; Clinton Mathai attending RPI; Christina and Francesca Moloney both attending Florida Gulf Coast University and Sameer Modasra attending the University of Buffalo.

Open Classes Available for the Fall and Winter

Do you know a kid who lives in the City of Albany, Schenectady, Troy or Rensselaer who could benefit from the 15-LOVE program? We have free, open classes on Saturday mornings at Capital Region Tennis & Fitness. Check our website at www.15love.org for more details.



From The Executive Director

I'm writing this just having come home from our very first Healthy Cooking Class! The idea came to us in many different ways, first from my father-in-law, Mario Marino, who mentioned wanting to do a cooking demonstration for the kids. I liked the idea and was randomly contacted by one of our former instructors, Elena Rosenbaum, MD, about getting involved again. Elena went off to become a family physician, recently made her way back to Albany and was interested in finding ways to become involved with the program. She was especially interested in fighting childhood obesity, as it was an interest of hers professionally as well. I was eager to get her involved and asked if she would create a training session for our instructors on healthy living – healthy eating, helping kids make simple healthy choices, even basics like how much sleep and water we need each day. She did this beautifully, providing a very informative session in terms the instructors could simply translate to the kids and included simple hands-on activities. In the planning process, I decided that we would make healthy living a focus for the whole year, and set out on a quest to find all the ways we could do that, big and small. We asked the instructors to rate their memories of presenting that off-court in the past, and then compared it to this year after receiving the training. We made strides in our own lives and eating habits to make healthier choices and try to have healthy snacks for the kids in the office. And there were two big projects that we undertook. One was a dream that was quickly embraced by the Board and became a reality - renovating our garage into a workout facility! The physical renovation is complete and we are working on getting the rest of the equipment donated or at low-cost. (Look for updates and pictures in the next newsletter!) The other was kicking off a Healthy Cooking Class Series. Luckily, our Board Members loved this idea as well and really ran with it, spearheaded by our newest Board Member, Nuhar Jaleel, with sous chef Mary Jean Krackeler. They made wraps with quinoa, salmon or turkey, avocado, spinach, feta, monterey jack cheese and miso dressing for over 20 people. My job was to cut up some fresh fruit and veggies for appetizers / dessert and rearrange the office to accommodate everyone. I cannot tell you how successful it was – not only that kids (and adults) tried foods they had never eaten, but that they liked it and were excited and interested. Families thanked us over and over and asked repeatedly about the next class. One family even wanted to come in to help us prepare next time, and another stayed to clean the office. Looking around the room, it was such a diverse group of people and they were having a great time, with a great meal. If you count the table tennis, every part of our mission was hit at this one event – multicultural relationships, good sportsmanship (manners and helping out), good health, family preservation, positive values, and education. All of that from one dinner with board members, staff, kids and parents. I called home as I was leaving our first cooking session and had to say goodnight to my one year-old over the phone. Not something I enjoy, but I wasn't bothered by it this time and I realized that it was because I had quality time with my other family. That I helped the five families who were there have some quality time and ease their pockets and lives for an evening so they could enjoy one another. And I'm proud of 15-LOVE. Proud that we do what we say we will do. We said we would create a healthy cooking class series, and we've done it. Proud that we have board members who care enough to get this intimately involved with our participants and make things happen. Proud that the next cooking class will be hosted by another board member and focus on healthy holiday baking. Proud that we have a space that allows us to do things like these classes. Proud that an instructor stopped in during the day to pick up some paperwork and just pitched in to help us move furniture and set up extra tables and chairs for the class without being asked. Proud and humbled that I get to be a part of 15-LOVE.



With kind regards,

Amber Marino
Amber Marino

KidsVantage

Stories Written by 15-Love Participants



Sportsmanship Pays

By Ian Castle, Age 16, East Greenbush, NY



Ian Castle pictured in the first row on the right with his 15-LOVE teammates at the New England Tennis Association Championships at Yale University on July 4, 2010.

This summer I had the opportunity to compete in the NETA Sectional Championships at Yale University. I entered the draw in Boys 16's Singles, and Boy's 16's Doubles. Little did I know that my success on the court would eventually lead to a life long dream of receiving a scholarship to Nick Bollettieri Academy in Florida where the pros that I so admired had played and trained.

The winning of this scholarship stemmed from a doubles match that, my partner and fellow 15-LOVE participant, Abhishek Paul, and I were a part of. It was the final match of the evening; a battle until the end. The lead would continually shift from our side of the court to theirs. The sunlight, which was steadily dwindling, along with the magnitude of the match leant itself to calls becoming more and more controversial. On multiple occasions my partner and I questioned our opponent's judgment on line calls. We thought the shots may have been in. That is not to say that our opponents did not feel the same way about some of our calls. But on one of their service games, a ball was hit that my partner called out, in which he then proceeded to stop the point. I had seen that the ball had clearing and caught the line. I did not wish to have this match tainted by a bad call. I overruled my partner's call and gave our opponents the point. I thought nothing of this decision as we still went on to win the match. However, later the next

Ian Castle has been a participant and volunteer with the 15-LOVE program for the past 4 years. Ian is currently a junior at Columbia High School and is ranked #1 for the Columbia High School Boy's Varsity Tennis Team.

day when the awards were being given out, I realized the significance of my call.

The tournament director began to give out other awards to those he thought were worthy. One of these awards was an IMG Scholarship to attend the Nick Bollettieri Academy in Florida. Jokingly I told my coach, Domingo Montes, that I had paid the director ten dollars to pick me for the scholarship, not knowing that I had actually been chosen for this award. When my name was eventually called, I was in total shock. I would later learn that Coach Montes had submitted my name to the director after my display of sportsmanship the night before.

I am truly grateful for all of those who helped me get this award, especially Coach Montes and my partner Abhishek Paul. I am looking forward to attending the Academy starting on November 13. I am very fortunate to have 15-LOVE in my life. The opportunities and life long friendships that I have made have been and will be an important part of my life forever.

Thanks 15-LOVE!

15-LOVE Alumni Q&A



Mary Nguyen

Mary Nguyen is currently a Patient Care Associate at Albany Medical Center in Albany, NY.

Where did you attend college and what is your current occupation?

MARY: I earned my B.S. in Biological Sciences from the University of Buffalo and I have a concentration in Pre-Health Studies. I'm currently working at Albany Medical Center, and working on continuing my education to become a registered nurse.

How did you become involved with 15-LOVE?

MARY: I watched my older brother participate in the program after-school at Arbor Hill Elementary, the 15-LOVE instructors let me help pick up tennis balls until I was old enough to participate.

What has been your favorite part about being part of the 15-LOVE family?

MARY: My favorite part about being involved with 15-LOVE is that we are a support team for each other and we always had instructors that taught us valuable lessons.

What are your fondest memories of 15-LOVE?

MARY: I loved the out of town tournaments in Harlem and New Haven. It was a great because we got to hang out, have meals together and cheer each other on during the tournament. It was a great bonding experience.

What advice would you give a young kid trying to find their way and succeed?

MARY: My advice for any young person is to not get caught up in the wrong crowd. If they're having trouble finding the right crowd, I would tell them, be part of the 15-LOVE Excellence program. Everyone is so incredibly supportive of one another and a friend for life.

Of all the lessons you've learned at 15-LOVE which one do you use in your every day life?

MARY: The most important lessons I've learned at 15-LOVE is the importance of volunteering and respecting others.

Any other thoughts you would like to add about 15-LOVE?

MARY: 15-LOVE was an immense part of my life. I learned many skills on the court that I was able to take off the court. I have the utmost respect for everyone that has to do with making the program a success. I love that 15-LOVE helps so many inner-city kids make their own success story. I just want to thank everyone who has been part of my journey at 15-LOVE.



15-LOVE Participants Meet Tennis Legend John McEnroe



15-LOVE participants had an opportunity to meet tennis great John McEnroe this summer during a meet 'n greet at the University at Albany SEFCU Arena. McEnroe was in town to play the NY Buzz tennis team. Before the match, participants enjoyed dinner along with other McEnroe fans and during dinner had the opportunity to snap this photo with McEnroe. Tickets for the dinner and match were generously donated to 15-LOVE by the USTA's Eastern Region/Northern Section.

DID YOU KNOW?

~Fun facts about the 15-LOVE Program~

- ✓ Since the start of the 15-LOVE program in 1990 we have served over 30,000 inner-city kids in the Capital Region.
- ✓ The Excellence Program has served over 100 kids and 100% of them have gone on to college.
- ✓ 17 of the current 21 instructors have been participants in the 15-LOVE program.
- ✓ 15-LOVE has helped over 80 children navigate the college admission and financial aid process through its College Prep Program.
- ✓ 15-LOVE provides other educational opportunities including trips to the Albany Institute of History & Art, leadership retreat weekends, visits to regional colleges and universities and power book clubs.
- ✓ Tennis Legend Arthur Ashe was instrumental in helping 15-LOVE begin, but 15-LOVE is a Capital Region organization and not a branch of any National Association. All resources stay in the Capital Region to help local kids and families.

Little d Award will be presented in Albany to prominent children's book author-illustrator

Noted children's author and illustrator Jarrett J. Krosoczka will receive the national Little d Award for humorous children's literature in Albany at the Fort Orange Club on November 10th from 6:00- 8:00 PM. He is being honored for his book, *Lunch Lady and the Cyborg Substitute*.

The book is part of the writer's popular Lunch Lady series for kids ages nine through eleven. Lunch Lady will be made into a Hollywood feature film next year starring Amy Poehler.

While in Albany on November 10th, Krosoczka will read at 10:00 AM at Arbor Hill Elementary School to 170 children and their teachers from grades three to six. A copy of the book will be given to all the children attending the reading. Krosoczka says: "There is nothing more delightful and rewarding than holding children's attention and knowing they are using their imaginations while they listen to stories."

Mayor Gerald Jennings and the Albany Tulip Queen, Mishka Gilkes, will participate at Arbor Hill School by introducing the author and talking to the students about the city wide Kids Read and the essay contest and activity packet tied to the award-winning book.

Krosoczka will sign books at the Book House at Stuyvesant Plaza in Albany at 11:30 AM on November 10th. The public is invited to both the book signing event & the award ceremony. Information may be obtained by contacting Lynn Derry at 347-0760.



2009 Tulip Queen, Juliana Hernandez, with winners of the 2009 Little d Kids Read Art & Essay Contest at LaSerre Restaurant

~GIVE A GIFT TODAY~

Simply fill out and mail the form below to 15-LOVE at: 785 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12206

<input type="checkbox"/> Fifteen-LOVE	\$15.00	NAME _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Thirty-LOVE	\$30.00	ADDRESS _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Forty-LOVE	\$40.00	CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Game	\$60.00	PHONE _____ EMAIL _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Set	\$80.00	If you are interested in any of the items below, please check the box.
<input type="checkbox"/> Match	\$100.00	
		<input type="checkbox"/> I would be interested in volunteering for the Book Power Club or other educational programs offered by 15-LOVE.

Capital Region Youth
Tennis Foundation



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18TH ANNUAL FORE LOVE & MONEY EVENT A GREAT SUCCESS

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated in this year's Fore Love & Money golf and tennis outing, held at Schuyler Meadows Club on June 14, 2010. Over **\$78,000** was netted from the day's events!

We extend our gratitude to all of those who participated, most particularly our corporate sponsors: Gold: Nigro Companies; Silver: Fenimore Asset Management, Stuyvesant Plaza and the Times Union; Bronze: Albany Valve & Fitting Company, Berkshire Bank, CDPHP, First Columbia, First Niagara, Kasselmann Electric, KeyBank, Krackeler Scientific, M&T Bank, Picotte Companies and Tri-City Rentals. Also, a special thanks to our golf cart sponsor Wells Fargo Advisors and lunch sponsor John & Margaret Malicki.

If you weren't able to join us for the 2010 Fore Love & Money event, mark your calendars for next year's event being held on **Monday, June 13, 2011** at Schuyler Meadows.



Vice President of the Board Bob Schmitz enjoys a day of golf along with Thomas Schmitz, Chris Drake and Bill Schmitz.