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Capital Region Youth
Tennis Foundation

SPRING 2006

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www.15LOVE.org

PROGRAM NEWS

Winter “Sessions” a Huge Success

A “session” schedule was implemented to the winter program this year which allowed 15-LOVE to reach out to more participants at more sites.

The winter program runs again this year from October through May, at 16 different sites including schools, Boys’ & Girls’ Clubs and community centers throughout Albany, Schenectady and Rensselaer Counties. Utilizing portable nets and foam tennis balls, instructors travel from site to site, carrying equipment and a positive attitude, as well as lots of fun and games.

In the past, each site ran for 21 weeks, many times with the same participants, which became difficult on a gym floor with limited programming options. This winter, each site ran a six-eight week session, with classes typically held once each week. If a site had multiple groups of children interested in attending classes, that site was able to operate during more than one session. Instructors loved the new schedule because it kept their classes fresh and spread the schedule out a bit.

Additional classes open to all children were also run on weekends at the Schenectady Racquet Club and the Capital Region Tennis & Fitness Club so that children not enrolled in an after school program had an opportunity to play.

During a typical winter, 15-LOVE serves approximately 600 children who also get an opportunity to participate in an Art and Essay Contest and receive off-courts similar to the summer program.

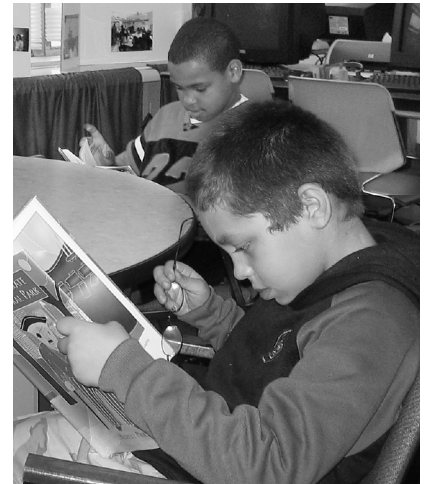
PROGRAM NEWS

15-LOVE Adds Book Power Club Site at Giffen Elementary

For nine years, 15-LOVE volunteers and Board Members have been working with students at Arbor Hill Elementary School once each week in our Book Power Club. This after school program promotes a love of reading and gives children books to own. 15-LOVE is proud to announce that a new Book Power Club at Giffen Elementary School began in the Fall of 2005.

Both programs work with third graders for two hours in a one-on-one environment. Every week, a volunteer brings a healthy snack to share while another volunteer reads aloud to the students. Once the snack is finished, students and volunteers finish the afternoon writing and doing a fun activity. The students at both schools came together in the Fall of 2005 to meet Bruce Hale, author and recipient of the first “little d” literary award, in honor of Denise McCoy.

He talked with them, illustrated for them and they all received signed copies of one of the books in his “Chet Gecko Mystery” series. Both programs are going extremely well thanks to the tireless efforts of over 20 volunteers. More volunteers are always needed. If you have a few extra hours to spare, please call 438-2039.



inside



pg.3

pg.4

pg.5

Executive Director News	2
Kids Vantage	3
Alumni Q&A	4
Spotlight on Volunteers	5
Letter from the President	5
Excellence Program Highlights	6
The Board and Staff	6

DONOR APPEAL

All Donations Help

No matter how small or large, your contribution can make a difference:

- \$2,000** – College visits throughout the Northeast for up to 12 students.
- \$1,500** – Entry fees for all local tournaments for all Excellence Kids.
- \$1,000** – Software or books for the College Prep Program.
- \$500** – Four portable nets for winter use.
- \$300** – Books for 3rd graders in the Book Power Club at an inner city school.
- \$125** – Hotel room for one night for four players at a semi-local tournament.
- \$50** – Two hours of indoor court time.
- \$25** – One hopper for tennis balls.

Our Wish List

- Ball machine
- Books (3rd grade reading level)
- Cans of new tennis balls
- Cases of Gatorade/Powerade
- Dorm room supplies
- Gas cards
- Gift certificates to sporting goods stores and/or grocery stores
- Prize items for games days
- Jump ropes, targets, cones, medicine balls, racquet bags
- Reading program volunteers
- School and art supplies
- Subscription to the *The Business Review* or *Chronicle of Philanthropy*
- Volunteers for tennis program

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Big Changes for 2006

I am thrilled that we have brought back our 15-LOVE newsletter, which has been missing for the last few years as we put our energy into creating a substantial annual report. 15-LOVE has been working hard behind the scenes to make sure the organization is as strong as possible so that we are ready and poised for growth. A few big changes for 2006:

A new office! That's right, 15-LOVE has moved once again to 85 Watervliet Avenue in Albany, hopefully a place we can stay. If you haven't seen our new office, I encourage you to stop by soon. Just be sure to call ahead to make sure we're not out teaching lessons!

We've created a Development Director position and are thrilled to welcome Eileen McCarthy as the brave person who has come in to help us carve out the responsibilities of that position. She has been with us since December 2005 and is not without plenty of work – including the daunting task of putting together this newsletter. We are thrilled to have her and I hope you will say hello when you stop by to see our new office.

We have also created the position of Program Director and are excited to have brought on board Ryan Artis, a former participant and instructor, and a 2005 graduate of Union College. Ryan will be instructing and creating our new database while working simultaneously on his Master's degree. It is a little tougher to find Ryan in our office when you are visiting because he is often out teaching.

15-LOVE has developed a strong strategic plan, which calls for growth and expansion over the next three years. We will be exploring new counties, working to increase participation and significantly increase our operating budget. I am honored to be a part of this organization, and truly looking forward to taking the organization to the next level. I hope that you will read this newsletter with growth in mind: new ideas, new sites and more participants.

Thank you! I look forward to working with all of you in the upcoming year!



Amber Ablan Marino



"I truly look forward to taking this organization to the next level."

CONGRATULATIONS

Amber Ablan Marino, Recipient of 40 Under Forty Award

Amber Ablan Marino recently was named a recipient of *The Business Review's 40 Under Forty* award. The *40 Under Forty* program identifies 40 of the Capital Region's most-promising young members of the business community under the age of 40. Amber was chosen out of 200 nominees. She will be recognized officially at *The Business Review's 40 Under Forty* luncheon to be held Thursday, May 4, 2006 at the Crowne Plaza.

KidsVantage

Stories Written by 15-LOVE Participants



MY POINT OF VIEW

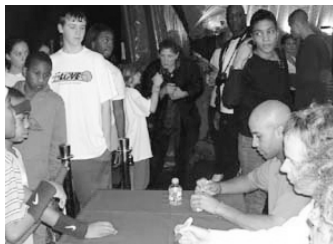
Meeting James Blake

Lyndsi Holmes, Niskayuna High School Junior and Excellence Participant

The 15-LOVE tennis program allows its participants amazing opportunities, including a trip to New York City last December. On December 26, 2005, members of 15-LOVE's Excellence Program were invited by the Harlem Junior Tennis Program to meet with famous tennis player, James Blake; his brother Thomas; and Patrick McEnroe, brother of the infamous tennis player John McEnroe and captain of the U.S. Davis Cup team. The Blakes grew up in the Harlem Tennis program and it was inspiring to see that a famous tennis player began his career in very much the same way as the 15-LOVE players.

As it turned out, more than just the two programs are similar. James Blake and 15-LOVE coach and program director, Ryan Artis, had an interesting experience because of how similar they look. As Ryan put it "We both noticed the resemblance. When James and I had the chance to talk, he told me that he wished I had worn sneakers so that I could play for him because he was tired. I responded that although we look alike, when it comes to tennis, I'm sure that the resemblance isn't as similar!"

During this event, 15-LOVE tennis players not only had the opportunity to watch these tennis icons play, but they also got to play with them. There was an autograph session and a group photo taken afterward. Everyone was excited about going, but the amount of time spent with these tennis players exceeded many people's expectations. As Excellence participant Colleen said, "I enjoyed the experience of watching James and his brother a great deal. It was like a private match just for us because there were only two programs there. I especially enjoyed hearing how they got their start in a program much like 15-LOVE. I feel quite fortunate to have had an experience like that."



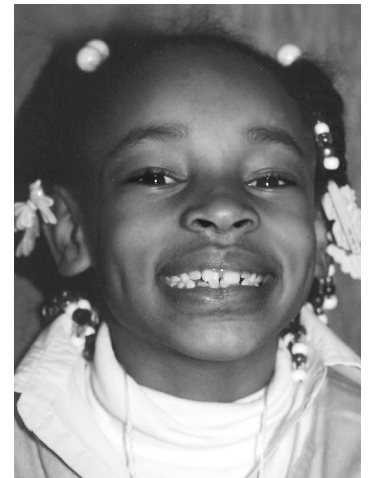
James Blake and 15-LOVE members meet in NYC.

MY STORY

Niasha, Age 8

Book Power Club Student

I was born in 1998. My birthday is on March 29th. I was born in Harlem, NY. My mom's name is Nikki, and my Dad's name is Raason. I have one sister named Menyara, who is four; and a brother named Uizziea, who just turned three. Some of my favorite things to do are to read, write, sing, dance, play basketball, paint, swim, laugh and fix things.



When I was five, my family moved to Virginia. I liked living there because it was warm and I always got to go swimming. When I lived there, I went to two schools. They were my play school and my original school. One of the fun things I did was to ride a school bus.

I joined the 15-LOVE Book Power Club. We come after school on Wednesdays. First, we eat snack and we have a story read to us. Sometimes, we write, read our story or play a game. Other times, we do arts and crafts. My favorite is writing and decorating Christmas cards. I like reading stories and writing about them.

When I grow up, I want to be a lawyer. I want to take care of people and help people so when they get into trouble, I will be there for them. When I become a lawyer, which will take many years of schooling, I will have to work very, very hard to be a good lawyer.

Someday, I would like to move back to Virginia. I would like to have children. I want to have a boy.

"I like reading stories and writing about them."

15-LOVE Alumni Q&A



Heba & Marjana Mair

Sisters Heba (left) and Marjana Mair (right) grew up in Albany's Arbor Hill neighborhood just one block from the tennis courts that Arthur Ashe used to kickoff the 15-LOVE program in 1990. Now in their sophomore and junior years, respectively, at the United States Military Academy at West Point, we asked Heba and Marjana to reflect on their experience at 15-LOVE in a Q&A session with Program Director, Ryan Artis.

How many years have the two of you been involved in the 15-LOVE program?

MARJANA: We have both been involved since 1990, when the program first came to Albany. We were involved up until we graduated from Albany High School (Marjana in 2002, and Heba in 2003). We also volunteer our time occasionally when we come back home.

You are both currently at West Point... have you chosen a major yet?

HEBA: I study International and Strategic History focusing on Latin America. I'm on the Systems Engineering track.

MARJANA: I study Law and Legal Studies. I'm also on the Systems Engineering track.

Take us back to your days in the 15-LOVE program... give us your most memorable moment.

MARJANA: For me it was the tournaments. They were so much fun because they allowed me to grow fellowship with my friends in the 15-LOVE program.

How about you Heba?

HEBA: The time we went to that getaway place in the snow... (laughing).

The leadership weekend in Lake George?

HEBA: That's the one... oh, and also Friday night bowling and just getting together. We all became such great friends.

I'm sure you two have had your fair share of 15-LOVE "off courts." Are there any in particular that stick out as you think back to those days as a 15-LOVE student?

MARJANA: The importance of a college education was stressed a lot. I know that helped motivate me to do well in high school.

HEBA: Drugs... that was a problem around where we lived, so it was a good learning experience.

Summarize the most valuable lesson you took away from all your years as a student at 15-LOVE.

HEBA: It's hard to find a most valuable lesson, but overall I made many great friends, stayed off the streets, made goals for my future, learned leadership skills and learned to play a great game of tennis.

MARJANA: Wow Heba, how do I follow that up! (Laughing.) Overall, 15-LOVE set me up for success by allowing me to learn how to prioritize and prepare for the future.

"Overall, 15-LOVE set me up for success..."

— Marjana Mair

15 LOVE 
Giving Kids The Advantage

SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEER DEVAN DALCOL

DalCol Commitment...

A Family Affair



In the Fall of 2003, Devan DalCol was a freshman at Shaker High School, playing on the Varsity Tennis team. Tennis is a big part of Devan's life and has been since she was seven years old. When she found out that she was required to perform community service hours for her Confirmation program, she looked for a meaningful activity that she would find interesting. Luckily for 15-LOVE, she stumbled upon

our flyer at the Schenectady Racquet Club, and decided to give us a call. Devan began volunteering at the open classes on Saturday afternoons, working with Ryan Artis and other instructors.

"I feel quite fortunate to have had an experience like this."

Devan says "the people" are her favorite part of 15-LOVE. "Everyone is so friendly and we always have a lot of fun." She enjoys "getting to know the kids" and loves "their enthusiasm for tennis." She loved it so much that she continued to volunteer the following year on Sunday afternoons at the open classes. Once that winter session was completed, Devan decided to volunteer through the summer, and agreed to help out four days per week at both Lincoln Park and Arbor Hill Park.

Now, as a Junior at Shaker High School, she plays #3 for the Varsity team, placed 6th in NYS playing doubles in 2005 and is in her third year with 15-LOVE. She continues to work on Saturday afternoons, now with the 12 and under Excellence Class (pictured).

Devan's commitment inspired her mother Kathy DalCol, and her sister, Lexi, to become involved in 15-LOVE too. Lexi, a freshman at Shaker High School, is working on completing her Confirmation service hours by volunteering for the new 15-LOVE Book Power Club at Giffen Elementary School. Since Kathy was driving and picking Lexi up, she figured she might as well stay to help. "We've had such fun with the children in the book club. We enjoy trying to find books that the kids might have an interest in, and Lexi enjoys picking out snacks to bring. The kids are a really fun group, and it's been a nice way for Lexi and I to spend time together," Kathy said.

15-LOVE extends its appreciation to Devan for her hard work, and for introducing her mother and sister to the program. All three women have provided countless hours of invaluable service. We hope this family will stay involved and inspire other families to consider volunteering as well. (Volunteers, call Amber Marino at 438-2039.)

CONGRATULATIONS

15-LOVE Wins Chapter of the Year Award

15-LOVE was the recipient the 2005 USTA's Eastern section of the NJTL "Chapter of the Year Award." The award is presented in recognition of continued excellence in tennis programming as a Level III NJTL Chapter. Amber Ablan Marino was presented with the award at a luncheon in Westchester, NY in January.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 12	Fore Love & Money Golf and Tennis Outing
June 19-23	Instructor Training
June 26-Aug 11	Summer Program
July 4th Weekend	Excellence Tournament at Yale University
August 10	Jamboree at Washington Park (Volunteers needed!)
October 16	Start of Winter Program

KEYNOTE

With Thanks...

Dear Friends:

Arthur Ashe once said, "From what we get, we can make a living, from what we give, makes a life." Thanks to many friends and supporters of 15-LOVE, we are helping make lives of inner-city youth in the Capital Region more meaningful. As we enter our 17th year of programming in June, we are pleased with the positive impact the program has had on thousands of participants, (with over 14,000 total participants during our history).

The program would not be here today were it not for the significant support obtained from hundreds of individuals, businesses, foundations and elected officials. For this broad-based support, we are indeed grateful.

We look forward to continuing to fulfill our mission of reaching youth in a loving, caring way in the counties of Albany, Schenectady and Rensselaer. Our strategy in fulfilling this mission is based upon partnerships with many individuals and organizations.

Thank you for your supportive role. We look forward to working together for years to come.

With appreciation and thanks,

Herb Shultz.

Herb Shultz, President

Capital Region Youth Tennis Foundation

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Capital Region Youth
Tennis Foundation



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Capital Region Youth
Tennis Foundation



REVIEW

Excellence Program Identifies Most Promising Students

15-LOVE's Excellence Program is a comprehensive tournament team program which provides high-level tennis training, opportunities for competitive play and, more importantly, off-court educational opportunities which, last month, included a trip to the Albany Institute of History and Art's "Explore Egypt" exhibit, and participation in the National Arthur Ashe Essay Contest.

The goal of the program is to assist each participant in attending college, and possibly playing tennis at the collegiate level. After having participated for at least one year in the general program, students who have been identified by instructors as having a positive attitude, promising tennis ability and have demonstrated a commitment to this year-round program, are invited to join. Excellence Program students are required to maintain a certain grade point average and perform at least 20 hours of service per year for 15-LOVE.

Currently, there are 40 participants in the program, ranging in age from 8-18. More than 15 of our 21 current instructors have come from the Excellence Program.

PLEASE JOIN US MONDAY JUNE 12, 2006 FOR THE 14TH ANNUAL

FORE LOVE & MONEY GOLF AND TENNIS OUTING

Schuyler Meadows Club, Loudonville, NY

Lunch, tennis, golf, dinner, silent auction and more...

For sponsorship information or more details, call the 15-LOVE offices at 438-2039.