

# Annual Report



# A LETTER from our EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Childhood memories, we all have them. We remember a simpler time, but as adults we can look back and reference people, events and circumstances that have stuck with us throughout our lives. Teachers, coaches, friends and, of course, family have all helped shaped who we are today.

The well-worn and slightly disorganized photo albums at EPATT are in constant demand by former students who stop by to visit the program. Young mothers and fathers are eager to show their children pictures of themselves from a time not so long ago. Those on break from college come back to say hi to their "second" family.

Last summer, an alum visited EPATT with her new husband. The couple lives in Kentucky where they work in the supply chain division at Ford Motor Company. The husband was noticeably on his best behavior and a little shy when introduced to the EPATT staff. He acted like he was meeting members of his wife's family for the first time, which in a way he was. After roughly 30 minutes of awkward conversation they retreated to the back of the office to begin poring over old photo albums. Since this was in the middle of the summer program, the staff went about their business and basically forgot about our visitors. About an hour later Kesha found them still looking through the books and asked," What is it with those photo albums?" The response? "I want to show my husband my childhood."

On a daily basis, we provide academic support, tennis instruction and parent education, but why is it that EPATT – the ethos, lessons, tutors and staff – has had such a lasting effect on our students and families? Has EPATT helped our students and families way more than we ever realized?

EPATT's ability to impact students long after their time with us has been a source of great pride for our staff, volunteers and board of directors. As much as EPATT has helped shape our students over the years, our students have equally helped shape us as individuals – the memories and experiences we have had along the way will be with us the rest of our lives.

Dave Higaki Executive Director



# WHAT IS EPATT?

East Palo Alto Tennis and Tutoring (EPATT) began in 1988 when former Stanford All-American tennis player Jeff Arons started a summer tennis program for students in East Palo Alto, California. (At the time, East Palo Alto was the murder capital of the U.S.) Jeff's idea was simple — to get kids "off the streets and on the courts" — and it worked. The program added academics and has evolved into a year-round after-school program that helps underserved children reach their potential academically, socially, emotionally and athletically. More than 27 years later, EPATT is recognized as one of the top education and tennis programs in the nation. EPATT provides free one-on-one tutoring, group tennis instruction and parent coaching for kindergarten through 12th grade students. EPATT operates on the Stanford University campus and in the Palo Alto Unified School District.







# **ACADEMICS**

# **Personalized One-on-One Tutoring**

At the beginning of the school year, over 150 Stanford student volunteer tutors are each strategically matched one-on-one with an EPATT participant. Every child receives up to four hours of individual tutoring per week in a safe, structured environment where he/she is given the support needed to succeed academically. Close interaction between the Stanford tutors and EPATT staff ensures that the specific academic needs of students are being addressed. Students also participate in extracurricular activities such as college tours, rafting trips, skiing trips and community service projects.

# TENNIS INSTRUCTION AND FITNESS

### Healthy Kids, Real Skills

Each week, students receive up to four hours of group tennis instruction. Tennis is an integral part of EPATT programming, providing the platform to teach students important athletic and life skills such as resilience, managing emotions, strategy, having a growth mindset, and teamwork. EPATT's coaching staff oversees practice sessions that promote sportsmanship, discipline, and fitness. Students have the opportunity to participate in USTA tournaments around the Bay Area. Several students play on their school's tennis team, as well.

# PARENT COACHING

### The Key to a Child's Success

Parents are EPATT's most important partners. EPATT staff communicates regularly with parents about their child's progress. EPATT requires that parents attend quarterly meetings and workshops, provide healthy dinners and snacks for students, and participate in one-on-one goal-setting sessions with staff. Parents are also responsible for providing EPATT staff with their child's school report cards, standardized test results and bi-weekly progress reports in order to personalize their child's tutoring.

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Lupe Talakai Tennis Manager Tatiana Makoni Office Manager

Kesha Weekes Academic Director & Middle School Group (MSG) Amy Kohrman Development & **Communications Manager**  Julio Hermosillo **Tennis Coach** 

Coordinator

Coordinator

Christina Erwin

Shirley Mak Elementary School Group (ESG) Project Rally Program

Coordinator

Tevita Talakai **Tennis Coach** 

Maribel Zarate

High School Group (HSG)

Coordinator

Alyssa Lytle Project Rally Site Supervisor

Pat Townsend Attendance & **Dinner Coordinator** 

Adrian Amaral Operations Director & Volunteer Tutor Coordinator

Anne Gould **Business Manager** 

# **MISSION**

Through partnerships with families, schools, and the community, EPATT promotes leadership, discipline, hard work and excellence among its K-12 students. Using the unique mix of one-on-one academic tutoring and group tennis instruction, EPATT strives to enrich the academic, athletic, social-emotional and life skills of its students. EPATT distinguishes itself from other after-school programs through its emphasis on parent education and accountability.

# **PROGRAMS**

### INTRODUCING PROJECT RALLY

With over 400 families on the waiting list, EPATT is expanding its reach and impact. EPATT has partnered with the Palo Alto Unified School District to provide a free after-school program called Project Rally. Participating students are from Fairmeadow and Hoover Elementary Schools in Palo Alto. Project Rally was designed to help shrink the achievement gap at a critical juncture: kindergarten and first grade. The program focuses on early literacy and social-emotional

development. Students work with a tutor, instructor and receive tennis instruction. The goals for Project Rally include:

- Equip students with the competencies, confidence and experience to be competitive and successful in school and life.
- Impact parents and families through parent education, giving them the tools and knowledge to raise higher achieving children.
- Introduce children to the game of tennis, providing a platform to teach students important life and non-cognitive skills such as resilience, managing emotions, strategy and teamwork.



# **ACADEMIC-YEAR PROGRAM**

EPATT's K-12 academic-year program is held at Stanford University. This program is divided into 3 groups: Elementary School Group (ESG) for children in grades K-5, Middle School Group (MSG) for children in grades 6-8, and High School Group (HSG) for children in grades 9-12. All programs include tennis, tutoring, parent coaching and enrichment activities.

# **SUMMER PROGRAMS**

ESG and MSG summer programs are offered on the Stanford campus every June. The ESG summer program is STEM-based and features certified teachers leading classroom instruction covering an engaging curriculum, which is reinforced by weekly field trips to science-rich destinations. HSG students work as interns. The summer program is essential in helping children avoid the "summer slide," which happens when kids forget in the summer months what they learned the previous school year. The MSG summer program focuses on life skills and also has weekly field trips. Both programs include tennis instruction and weekly family picnics. The Friday night picnics give parents a chance to hear from teachers how their student is progressing in the program.



# THE EPATT EFFECT

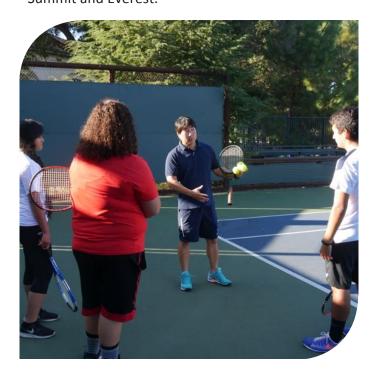
- 40% of students have been in the program for three years or more.
   o 57% of these students improved their GPA over three years, on average, by a full grade point.
- Standardized reading test (SRI) results for 82% of our 5th graders from the beginning to the end of the school year increased, on average, more than one-and-a-half times the expected growth in reading performance.
  - o In some cases, students increased their SRI score by as much as two years growth.
- Standardized math test results for 73% of our 5th graders exceeded expected growth by at least one year and some by as much as three years.



We call this the "EPATT Effect" and it's helping to shrink the achievement gap.

# 2014-15 HIGHLIGHTS

- Twenty new families in the ESG program.
- Forty-five ESG families received a bookshelf containing a children's dictionary and 10-12 hand selected books.
- The ESG STEM summer program was praised for its parent component and engaging enrichment activities.
- Eighth graders were accepted to local private and charters schools like Serra, St. Francis, Summit and Everest.



- Middle-schoolers received school-wide awards for achievement, attitude and English-Language Arts. One student was selected to be a speaker at his school's graduation ceremony.
- EPATT maintained its high school graduation rate of 100%, compared with the reported East Palo Alto average of less than 40%.
- More than 150 Stanford University students volunteered 12,000 tutoring hours.
- Four out of five graduating seniors are attending college. The fifth is attending culinary school.
- EPATT students received \$26,000 in scholarships for college tuition from EPATT donors.
- Parents put in a total of 2,026 hours, more than doubling last year's 800 hours. Parental involvement hours include time our parents spend volunteering at their child's school, in the community and with extracurricular activities.
- The children of the top ten most involved parents had an average GPA of 3.6.
- EPATT signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Palo Alto Unified School District, agreeing to partner together on a new early literacy program called Project Rally.

# PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

- 96% said that their child is better prepared for school, having attended EPATT.
- 96% have internet access at home.
- 96% have set expectations with their child for academic performance.
- 71% are aware of their child's high school's A-G requirements.
- 98% said they have noticed a positive change in their child's attitude since coming to EPATT.
- 96% said their child's academic performance has improved since coming to EPATT.

100% of parents said that participating in EPATT meetings and workshops has made them a more effective parent.

# EPATT-HOSTED PARENT WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS:

- Financing College
- Raising a Student Athlete
- Avoiding the Winter Slide
- Hormones and Homework
- Transitioning to High School
- Communicating with Your Child's Teacher
- College Tours: Finding the Right School for Your Child
- Summer Plans
- Understanding the Educational Landscape
- Health and Wellness Fair

# **ADVOCACY**

Staff advocacy constitutes advice and recommendations to parents about their children, as well as attending off-site visits to schools. It includes topics like recommending an EPATT student to a private school and attending parent - teacher conferences. EPATT staff members spend roughly 26 hours per month on advocacy. EPATT's high rate of advocacy sets it apart from other after-school programs. EPATT's staff cares deeply about each student and takes the time to communicate with parents, tutors, teachers and school administrators to ensure that students' needs are being met.

# **EPATT DEMOGRAPHICS**

EPATT serves the neighborhoods of East Palo Alto and Eastern Menlo Park. Seventy-five percent of our students are in the Tinsley (Voluntary Transfer) Program and are bused to schools in more affluent communities. EPATT's diverse staff, which mirror the demographics of the EPA community, have been role models, advocates and mentors for thousands of EPATT students.



Pacific Islander 9%

Multiple Ethnicities 8%

African American 7%

Latino 76%

# TUTOR OF THE YEAR Alina Liao

Inspiration and motivation are the driving forces behind EPATT tutor Alina Liao. "My economics teacher in high school left a lasting impression on me. We had just watched a video on the achievement gap in Los Angeles and he remarked, 'Nobody gets to choose their parents.' That's when it struck me. I had been lucky to be born into the right family." Alina's mantra became, "I believe each child has the innate ability to be successful." This formative moment was the start of Alina's path to working in public education and devising solutions to help reduce education inequality.



Alina was fortunate to grow up in a family that valued education. Alina was a recruited gymnast at Yale majoring in Economics. The stark juxtaposition of an Ivy League school located in New Haven, the 18th most dangerous city in America at the time, wasn't lost on Alina. "In New Haven, I saw first-hand underserved and at-risk youth and began to volunteer at a local elementary school."

After graduating, she spent two years in Washington, D.C. at an economic consultancy firm. Alina wanted to attend graduate school but was unsure of what path to take. She applied to four schools but was not accepted at any of them. "This was an important setback as it forced me to really figure out what I wanted to do. I kept coming back to the importance of every child having the opportunity to be his/her best self. I began to transition my career by taking classes in the School of Education at the University of Maryland." With renewed focus, Alina sought out graduate programs that offered a Masters in Education along with a Masters of Business Administration. Alina is now in her second year at Stanford's Joint MA/MBA program.

At Stanford, Alina is one of the leaders of the Graduate School of Business's Challenge for Charity program. C4C, as it is known, is a non-profit organization that was started at Stanford and boasts chapters at the top nine West Coast MBA programs. The purpose of C4C is to help future business leaders develop a lifelong commitment to community involvement and social responsibility. One of their charters is to encourage MBA students to volunteer at approved local organizations like EPATT. Another is to raise money. In 2015, C4C donated \$15,000 to EPATT.

Alina has worked tirelessly to recruit her GSB peers for the highly successful Speaker Series, exposing EPATT kids to graduate students who have something to share with these young learners. In addition Alina, together with EPATT staff, planned and executed this year's new Health and Wellness Fair for the EPATT community.

Adrian Amaral, EPATT's Volunteer Tutor Coordinator, says of Alina: "Alina was a rockstar! From managing tutors to tennis nights with the kids, to the EPATT Health Fair and GSB Speakers Series every night for three months, Alina led the best year of GSB involvement at EPATT."

When asked about her most satisfying moment as a tutor, Alina explained, "The child I tutor was really struggling with word problems in her math class. It was a challenge for me to figure out a way to break it down in such a way that she could see how to solve for the answer. Helping her parse and synthesize the information with repeated success was hugely rewarding." Alina feels that, in her way, she is helping to close the achievement gap one child at a time. "At EPATT, each child has the opportunity to be his/her best self."

# STUDENT OF THE YEAR Adilene V.

Five years ago, EPATT offered a summer program in East Palo Alto at Cesar Chavez Academy. It was during this five-week program that a promising middle school student, Adilene, caught the eye of Kesha Weekes, EPATT's Academic Director. A few months later, Adilene's intellectual curiosity led her to enroll herself in EPATT's year-round program, a unique situation as most students are enrolled by their parents. Clearly, Adilene was different.

Watching her flourish at EPATT as an 8th grader, Kesha believed in Adilene's potential. While Adilene fully expected to attend Carlmont High School, Kesha's thoughts turned to Pinewood, one of the first private schools to partner with EPATT over 20 years ago and to offer full or partial scholarships to deserving participants. With only one spot open for the incoming freshman class in 2012, Kesha recommended Adilene and the rest is history.

It's no surprise that this open-minded, friendly and self-proclaimed eclectic student was going to make the most of it. "I'm going to college," declared Adilene all those years ago. With her SAT testing behind her, Adilene will celebrate turning 17 by heading to Wellesley College and Williams College on fully-funded travel grants to visit their campuses. However, these are only two of the 12 colleges to which this first-generation prospective college student plans on applying. "I think I want to major in International Relations because I really like learning about other cultures and am passionate about foreign languages."

This passion for languages comes naturally, growing up in a bilingual Mexican-American family. As she started drawing and then watching Japanese Anime, Adilene says, "I was frustrated by the subtitles and wanted to understand them, so I went online to learn Japanese." This self-motivation led her to discover a 30-day exchange program in Japan that she participated in two years ago. Add to that the AP French class she's taking at Pinewood during her senior year, and you can see that languages definitely speak to Adilene.

Adilene gives all the credit to the EPATT staff and tutors for EPATT's lasting impression on her. "EPATT's Executive Director Dave Higaki and my tutors will be in my life forever. I'll never forget my first tutor who taught me not to be afraid to try new things. He tried Computer Science and it became his passion. That's why I'm not afraid to leave California for college. I know I'm going to be successful." That's exactly the kind of self-belief and confidence fostered by EPATT staff and tutors that is a benchmark for EPATT's success.



An avid reader of books, Adilene's favorites are <u>Catcher in the Rye</u> by J.D. Salinger, <u>Things Fall Apart</u> by Chinua Achebe and <u>Brave New World</u> by Aldous Huxley. For now, however, the reading challenge will be squarely placed on the college admissions officers at the schools to which Adilene is applying. With her 3.7 GPA and AP course load, Adilene will be an attractive prospect to any admissions officer.

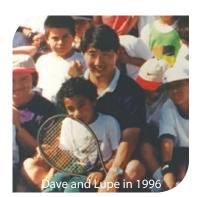
# ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR Lupe Talakai

This past summer, Emirates Airline, title sponsor of the U.S. Open, presented awards to individuals who have made a difference at their respective charitable organizations. EPATT alum and tennis coach Lupe Talakai was selected as one of this year's recipients, earning a VIP weekend at the U.S. Open. Returning from his all-expense-paid extravaganza, Lupe was all smiles. "It was my first trip to New York. I was instantly overwhelmed and couldn't believe I was there representing myself, my family, my community and EPATT!"

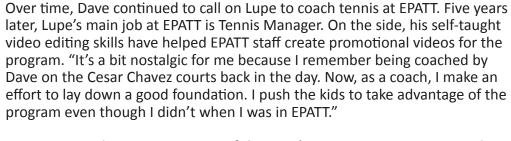


The road to this honor, however, was not an easy one. Growing up in East Palo Alto, where he still lives in a mobile home with his family, including his identical twin brother, identical twin sisters and a younger brother, Lupe reflected on his years as a high school student at Menlo-Atherton High School. "I physically left EPATT during my sophomore year but probably mentally checked out earlier. Looking back, I wish I had stayed in the program. I lacked the study skills and time management ability. I just didn't appreciate what EPATT provided." Although he and his family had been around EPATT since he was a young child, he admits they didn't take advantage of what EPATT had to offer. "To us, EPATT was like any other after-school program: a place to go and hang out. Now, as a staff member, I see it as so much more. Of course, EPATT has changed throughout the years. In fact, I know many of the EPATT rules and policies exist because of me and my family. We would have been kicked out of the program if we were in it today!"

After graduating from M-A by a narrow margin in 2009 with no plans to continue his education, Lupe found himself spending time with friends who were not the best role models and he got into some minor trouble. "I was very lucky when Dave Higaki, EPATT's Executive Director, called me in 2010 with an offer to chaperone an EPATT trip to Yosemite. He had heard that I was lacking direction and Dave used this trip as a way to set me straight." That was the beginning of turning over a new leaf for Lupe. On the Yosemite trip, which is a reward for those EPATT kids who meet the grade point average to participate, Lupe realized that the kids depended on



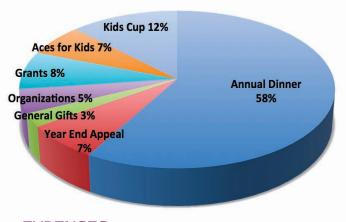
him. "I became the role model. At night when Yosemite went dark and the kids got scared, I was there to calm them down. It was gratifying for everyone, including me. Not to mention the earful I got from Dave, when I was captive in his truck for the four-hour drive home!"





Lupe is a very deserving recipient of this year's Emirates Returns Mentorship Award and EPATT is lucky to have him on its courts every single afternoon. "The best part of coaching is being with the kids. I can relate to them. I was one of them and I see these kids back in my neighborhood. Using tennis to teach life skills and helping kids believe in themselves, that's what I find the most rewarding."

# INCOME SOURCES FY 2015

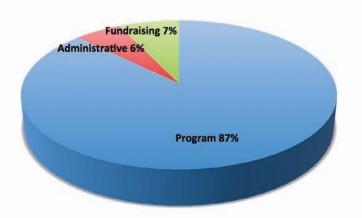


# BALANCE SHEET AS OF 8/31/15

### **ASSETS**

Current Assets	\$ 530,039
Fixed Assets	\$ 40,998
Long-Term Assets	\$ 993,717
Total Assets	\$ 1,564,754

# EXPENSES FY 2015



# **LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

Operations	\$ 443,439
Endowment	\$ 993,717
Property and Equipment	\$ 40,998
Temp. Restricted Net Assets	\$ 86,600
Total Liabilitlies & Net Assets	\$ 1,564,754

# **HIGHLIGHTS**

- EPATT has approximately one year's operating budget in reserve.
- In September 2014, EPATT held its inaugural Kids Cup, one of the largest ProAm tournaments in California. The event raised over \$100,000 for Project Rally, EPATT's new early literacy program.
- 87% of EPATT's expenses are program costs.
- EPATT is fiscally responsible as it has stayed within budget the past three years.
- EPATT ended the fiscal year with a Net Income of \$122,414, which was \$54,085 above the budgeted amount. This was largely due to the success of the EPATT Kids Cup.
- In May 2015, EPATT held its Annual Dinner with Tracy Austin as the guest speaker. The event raised over \$600,000.



# **DONORS**

Thank you to all our 2014-15 donors for your generosity and support.

Together, we're transforming lives and helping to close the achievement gap.

# SEPTEMBER 1, 2014 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 2015

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EPATT would like to thank the following companies that matched gifts during our 2015 fiscal year:
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# SPECIAL EVENTS

# **EXCLUSIVE SCREENING OF ALTHEA**

EPATT was proud to host the west coast premiere of *ALTHEA*. The award-winning documentary chronicled the life of Althea Gibson, a pioneer in the sports of tennis and golf. The screening was a "thank you" to our donors. Special thanks to EPATT supporter Jane Solomon and Rex Miller, *ALTHEA*'s



director, for bringing this important documentary to EPATT and allowing us to share Althea's story.

# KIDS CUP PRO-AM

Headlined by Tracy Austin, Lindsay Davenport, and Brad Gilbert, EPATT hosted the Kids Cup Pro-Am Tennis Tournament, which benefits EPATT's new program, Project Rally. Joining the tennis legends were several former Stanford tennis stars who returned to the farm to help support EPATT. Last year, Team Yelp, captained by Yelp's CEO, Jeremy Stoppelman, took home the Cup on what was a memorable, competitive and fun day for all involved. This year, Team Funball, led by Jake Leschly, and Team Fed Heads, led by Pam and Peter Rosekrans, won the Cup for their divisions. EPATT would like to thank Scott Russell for championing the idea and bringing the EPATT Kids Cup to fruition.





(From left to right: Amy, Kesha, Maribel, Lupe, Julio, Adrian, Christina, Pat, Tevita, Anne, Shirley, Alyssa, Dave not pictured: Tatiana)











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