



The Game-Changing After-School Tennis and Tutoring Program

Volume 4, Issue 3

Summer 2014

A BIG THANK YOU to those of you who attended and supported this year's dinner, making it our most successful fundraising event to date. Special thanks to the Bank of the West, our presenting sponsor. We are so grateful for their commitment to EPATT.

I would also like to thank our amazing Board for their time, guidance and hard work. I am humbled by their belief in and passion for our program and mission. I'd like to acknowledge our outgoing Board Chair, John Robinson, whose leadership, good humor, and sage advice will impact our organization for years to come. And I'm looking forward to working with Verity Powell, our incoming Board Chair.



Dave Higaki, Executive Director

As I reflect on the past year and our accomplishments, the EPATT full-time staff -- Christina Erwin, Joseph Lester, Franklin Matthews and Kesha Weekes -- stand out as the driving force behind our ability to make an impact on the students, families and community which we serve. It is truly an honor to work with these outstanding individuals and I consider myself so lucky to get to collaborate with them every day.

I am really proud to announce that this year we have college graduates from Creighton University and Santa Clara University, and outgoing seniors who will be attending Loyola Marymount University, Sonoma State University, Hampton College and Wesleyan University this fall.

Thank you for believing in the work we do.

Have a great summer,  
Dave



**Annual Dinner Raises \$660,000!**

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported EPATT's 22nd Annual Dinner. What a night! Donors helped us break all previous fundraising records!

**EPATT Board of Directors**

Chair: John Robinson  
CEO, Group Robinson, Global  
Financing Advisors

Vice-Chair: Nancy Serrurier  
Community Volunteer

Secretary: Dick Gould  
Director of Tennis, Stanford  
University

Treasurer: Andy Chase  
Managing Director, Morgan  
Stanley Smith Barney

Three-time Super Bowl Champion, Super Bowl MVP, and NFL Hall-of-Famer Steve Young was the guest speaker and had the sold-out crowd laughing out loud with his stories about life as a 49er. Young talked about how in the early days as a 49er he was overwhelmed and filled with self-doubt until someone pointed out to him that he had a great coach, a great team, and a great role model. Suddenly he saw how lucky he was to have so much support. In his words, "Looking back on my life I realized I had a platform...that gave me the opportunity to see how good I could be. If you really want to accomplish anything (you need to) look for those platforms that help you see how good you can be...That's all you can ask for in life... (EPATT is) providing a platform for young kids to see how good they can be and holding them accountable to do something really great. The greatest thing that ever happened to me was recognizing the platform and having the opportunity to find out (how good I could be)."



ESG Coordinator  
Christina Erwin

### Staff Spotlight: Christina Erwin, Elementary School Coordinator

Christina grew up a gifted student in Los Angeles and graduated from Stanford University in 2000, earning a BA in English and African American Studies with honors. Christina joined EPATT in 2000 as the College Preparatory Coordinator and eventually became the High School Group Coordinator. Christina has helped hundreds of EPATT students graduate from high school and attend college. Now, as the Elementary School Coordinator, Christina is bringing her leadership, creativity, and resourcefulness to the 60+

kindergarten through fifth grade students and families. Christina says, "Working at EPATT is my calling. I'm very honored to work here." Christina's tireless commitment and dedication is one of the reasons students flourish at EPATT. She has made a dramatic difference in the lives of EPATT students.

### Aces for Kids Fundraiser

The annual Bank of the West Classic tennis tournament is only a few weeks away. The best women's tennis players will be competing, from Wimbledon winners to up-and-coming stars.

The Bank of the West has again selected EPATT to be the event's featured charity. For over ten years, EPATT has held its annual Aces for Kids benefit during the Classic. You can help underwrite the costs of an EPATT student by pledging a dollar amount per ace served (or a set amount). Founded by Tad Taube, Aces for Kids is a fun way to support EPATT. For the sixth year running, Bank of the West will donate \$100 to EPATT for every donor who pledges to Aces for Kids. To participate, please visit our Aces [page](#).

A shout out to Lane Leschly and his Menlo School tennis teammates who held their own version of Aces for Kids and raised over \$10,000 this past spring. Thank you, Menlo!



Christine Alloo  
Community Volunteer

Cameron Bianchi  
Community Volunteer

Grady Burnett  
COO, Flurry

Sue Diekman  
Community Volunteer

Cameron Jones,  
GM, CB Addison

Marcia Pade  
Community Volunteer

Verity Powell  
Community Volunteer

Ted Robinson,  
Sports Broadcaster

Karen Sonneborn  
Community Volunteer

Nate Taylor,  
Partner, KKR

Carl Touhey  
CEO, Bancap Self Storage  
Real Estate

Dan Turbow  
Attorney, Wilson Sonsini  
Goodrich & Rosati

Ellie Victor  
CEO, Zoom Marketing

### EPATT President's Council

Susan Ford Dorsey  
Rick Fluegel  
The Gifford Family  
Jeff Pickard  
Sven-Erik Simonsen  
Tad Taube

### Heartfelt Thanks!

We are grateful to several foundations for their generous grants: Bay Area Sports Hall of Fame (BASHOF), Palo Alto Community Fund, Facebook, and USTA Serves

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**Just click here.**

## EPATT Tournament Team

Every year we recruit EPATT students to compete at local tournaments. This year's tournament team was especially strong. We had 10 kids, aged 12-18. They played 10 tournaments during the school year and 5 during the summer.



Having a tournament team gives relevance and meaning to daily tennis practice. It teaches youth about competition, team work, self-confidence and discipline. EPATT pays for all tennis-related expenses -- fees, coaches, team uniforms -- and provides transportation to tournaments. Thanks to a

EPATT Tournament Team

generous \$15,000 grant from USTA Serves, most of these costs were covered. EPATT helps diversify the game of tennis by providing opportunities for minorities to compete. The team also serves as an inspiration for future team players at EPATT.



Summer Program Blooming Garden

## STEM Summer Program

EPATT's STEM Summer Program was designed to extend the learning opportunities for underserved elementary-school aged youth from East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park who don't have access to summer school. By focusing on K-5th graders, EPATT tries to shrink the experiential gap that exists with lower socioeconomic children, especially in Silicon Valley. EPATT helps expose children to new environments and subjects, connecting school and life, and making learning relevant.

The goals of the Summer Program are two-fold: to prepare participants for the next academic year and counter the effects of the "summer slide." The "summer slide" is what often happens when, over the summer months, school-aged children forget what they learned during the school year. It's been reported that every summer, "underserved youth lose an average of two months of grade-level equivalency because of unequal access to summer learning opportunities."

Every day, Monday through Thursday, students receive three hours of academic instruction from certified teachers, and one hour of tennis instruction. On Fridays, the students take a field trip to science-themed destinations including the San Francisco Zoo, the California Academy of Science and the San Francisco Exploratorium. There are also grade-based field trips to Stanford University's solar car project, the Children's Discovery

Museum, the CuriOdyssey (formerly Coyote Point) Museum, the Hiller Aviation Museum, and the Helix Community Science Center. These field trips reinforce the concepts presented earlier in the week and often represent first-time visits for our students.

After four weeks, students will have learned new skills from a fun-filled, hands-on, STEM-rich academic and tennis program.



Crystal P.

### **Crystal P. Wins Palo Alto Award**

This spring Middle School student Crystal P. won the 2014 Student Leadership Award at her school, JLS. This award is not just a testament to Crystal's academic accomplishments but also to her strong leadership skills.

What makes this award especially meaningful is that Crystal has an IEP (individualized education plan). Kesha Weekes, Middle School Coordinator, describes Crystal as the "hardest working special education student I've ever had." Crystal herself requested to be mainstreamed next year as she enters Gunn High School. "Crystal is a poster child for how one is supposed to move through -- and out of -- the special ed system," says Kesha.



### **Ladies Doubles Ladder Celebrates a Decade of Helping EPATT**

For ten years, Fremont Hills Country Club women players have been raising money for EPATT with their doubles ladder. This year they're reaching out to other clubs to join in the competition. If you would like to participate, please email [Jim McLennan](mailto:Jim McLennan). Warm thanks to Jim and the Fremont Hills women for their

steadfast support and competitive spirit.

### **Middle School Group News**

The Middle School Group truly has had an amazing year! Most students have achieved the academic goals they set for themselves and many have exceeded them. This year in MSG, students learned how to write in their planner, study for tests, participated in a book club, and asked questions in school, not to mention that each one of them received over 120 hours of free tutoring! As a result of their efforts, 20 students (out of a class of 37) had a GPA of 3.0 or above. Students shined not only at EPATT, but also at their schools. MSG students received a number of school-wide awards like Panther Pride, Jaguar of the Quarter, Honor Roll, Academic Excellence, Citizenship and Leadership awards. In addition, every 8th grader who received assistance from EPATT to apply to private or charter schools was accepted to at least one of the schools to which he or she applied. Students were admitted to Eastside, Woodside Priory, and Pinewood, as well as charter schools like Summit Preparatory High School and Everest High School.



**HandsOn Tech**  
Silicon Valley

## Thank you, Kristen and James!

We are so fortunate that HandsOn Tech of Silicon Valley selected EPATT as one its beneficiaries. HandsOn Tech offers information technology-related volunteer services. Our HandsOn Tech contact Nick Petrilla recruited two talented volunteers for EPATT. James Grisham has helped us maintain our computers and printers and will help us set up a server. Kristen Kenedy is helping to redesign the EPATT web site.

### EPATT in Social Media

Subscribe to our educational videos on youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5X0i6jfoxfZINcjND08UeA>

Please join our FaceBook group!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/EPATT/>

"Like" our FaceBook page!

<https://www.facebook.com/goepatt>

Former tutors, check out this page just for you!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/EPATTTutorAlumni/>

### About EPATT

East Palo Alto Tennis and Tutoring (EPATT) is entering its third decade transforming the lives of students from East Palo Alto and east Menlo Park by helping them develop the academic, physical, and life skills necessary for high school graduation and success in college. Through a comprehensive after-school program of one-on-one academic tutoring, tennis instruction, and family coaching for students in grades K through 12th, EPATT provides a supportive environment that values respect, responsibility, and teamwork, creating opportunities for success otherwise difficult to imagine.

Come see EPATT in action. To arrange a tour, please email Amy Kohrman, Development Coordinator, at [amy@epatt.org](mailto:amy@epatt.org) or call 650.799.0446.

Learn more about EPATT by visiting [www.epatt.org](http://www.epatt.org).