Inspiring Future Players
Around the country, the USTA’s Net Generation brand is providing a unified umbrella to grow this sport through youth participation.

The USTA’s new youth tennis brand—Net Generation—continues to connect with tennis providers throughout the country. Designed to bring more young players into the sport through a variety of programs, teaching tools and learning opportunities, Net Generation is bringing together a national community of parents, coaches, players, teachers and volunteers.

Providers who are listed on NetGeneration.com have access to a variety of resources and tools and can be included in a free searchable directory, so parents can find local programs and places to play. Importantly, to register for Net Generation, tennis providers will need to complete a complimentary background check.

“There are incredible things going on around the country to grow tennis,” says Craig Morris, the USTA’s chief executive of Community Tennis. “We want Net Generation to be the movement that unites all these great things and is a point for the customer to connect with local programs.” To help inspire the future of this sport, sign up at NetGeneration.com.

For kids, Net Generation is about learning the sport, having fun, improving skills and meeting new friends.
Net Generation is bringing together a national community of parents, coaches, players, teachers and volunteers.

**FLORIDA**

Connecting Schools, Facilities and Pros

Youth tennis initiatives are not new. But no initiative so far has connected schools with local tennis facilities, required a Safe Play verification for coaches and created a website and app that includes curriculum, resources, education and marketing support.

At least, not until Net Generation.

“It’s fantastic,” says USTA Florida Net Generation ambassador and board member Scott Colebourne. “As a new parent, I’m familiar with the fears of trusting others with your children, so for me, I love the background-check element.”

In Florida, local pros are partnering with schools to provide Net Generation’s cutting-edge curriculum. “It has all the programming needed online or printed to get more children playing tennis in physical education classes and in after-school programs,” notes USTA Florida Net Generation ambassador and tennis director Joe D’Aleo. “With all the resources, it’s a one-stop shop.”—*Rick Vach*

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA**

Bringing in Kids at the Grassroots

Scott McCulloch, vice president of operations at Cliff Drysdale Management, was sold on Net Generation from the beginning, and all 31 of his clubs are now registered in the program.

“Net Generation is a winner,” McCulloch says. “It gives free tools and resources to schools and providers to expose kids to tennis at the grassroots level, and it provides schools and community tennis providers with training, curriculum, age-appropriate equipment and necessary resources.”

McCulloch is also excited that Net Generation bridges the gap between schools and partners. “It makes it effortless for schools to provide tennis in phys ed classes. Each school has a partner dedicated to them, allowing PE teachers to teach tennis to kids in a fun and easy way,” he notes.

“We’ve reached schools before, but Net Generation allows us to expose new kids to tennis in such a positive and fun way, and that’s the message.”

**NORTHERN**

Consistent and Comprehensive

Net Generation ambassador Felicia Raschiatore has been in tennis a long time, first as a Top 100 player and now as a 32-year teaching pro at Williston Tennis Center in Minnetonka, Minn. Over the years, she’s seen many tennis programs that hoped to increase youth engagement, but she firmly believes that Net Generation is finally the ace the industry has been seeking.

“The USTA has spent a lot of time researching and talking to successful tennis professionals in compiling a comprehensive, easy-to-understand program for anyone to promote and grow the game,” she says, adding that what helps set Net Generation apart is the free coaching app.

The app includes lesson plans, competencies and assessments for red, orange and green ball levels—allowing all coaches to have that information and videos at their fingertips. It also creates a consistent level of instruction and advancement.—*Lisa Mushett*
“You have nothing to lose and everything to gain,” says Rachel Rhoney about joining USTA’s Net Generation.

Rhoney is a PTR-certified coach and assistant director of the Mary and Frances Youth Center at the Virginia Commonwealth University campus in Richmond, Va. She oversees Lobs & Lessons, a state, regional and national award-winning NJTL program. Each year, the program serves more than 250 youngsters in afterschool programs, 220 in special events and 280 through summer camps.

“Whether you are a seasoned professional or just starting your coaching journey, Net Generation has all the tools you need, from lesson plans to marketing materials,” she says.

The Lobs & Lessons staff has found Net Generation easy to navigate and implement. “We especially appreciate how easy it is to find lesson plans and even create your own plans through the app. We love being able to use it to challenge our youth in real time with skills assessments,” Rhoney adds.

“We became a Net Generation community provider because we believe in creating a positive and fun environment for kids to learn tennis and life skills.”

—Lauren Hoffmann

Sue Pendo, tennis director at Braemar Country Club in Tarzana, Calif., is a driving force behind youth tennis. As a Net Generation ambassador, Pendo was recently awarded SCTA’s Net Generation Service Award for growing and promoting youth tennis.

Pendo has her fingers on the pulse of SoCal youth tennis, from Junior Team Tennis to Youth Progression to Early Development Camps. She’s excited that Net Generation puts tennis for ages 5 to 18 “under one umbrella” and provides excellent resources.

“For pros, there are plenty of coaching resources,” she says, “plus plenty of information to educate and give marketing support, all to help us get better at the job we do. It connects the tennis community of certified coaches, schoolteachers, parents and volunteers. And it connects tennis programs, school programs, playing opportunities—the list goes on and on.” —Cari Buck
Cutting Through the Clutter

Kendall Chitambar, director of tennis and player development at Rocky Mountain Tennis Center in Boulder, Colo., was invited to become the Net Generation ambassador for USTA Intermountain about a year ago. “I immediately liked the idea of bringing tennis for youth under one big umbrella,” says Chitambar, a former professional player with more than 22 years of coaching experience. “I’ve always felt there were too many versions of tennis in the U.S., especially for juniors.”

One of the main benefits Chitambar sees in Net Generation is its comprehensive approach. “The USTA has created a teaching system you can follow as much as or as little as you want,” he explains. “If you follow the curriculum to the letter, you will have amazing players coming out of your programs. If you just use bits and pieces of the curriculum, you are still following a great pathway of progression.

“As tennis pros, we have to continue to raise the bar on our own development. It’s not enough to just go out there and feed balls all day.” — Wendy Anderson

‘The Tennis World for Kids’

“When I explain what Net Generation is to coaches, parents and kids, I highlight what it’s all about,” says Brenton James, a USTA faculty coach for the section, working out of the Peachtree City (Ga.) Tennis Center. “It’s the tennis world for kids, and a way to grow your tennis programming with your community.”

James has made presentations to the USTA Southern Tennis Professional Committee, USTA Atlanta and to other volunteers and tennis staff. He tells coaches to use as much or as little of the curriculum as they need.

“I’ve also had the opportunity to set up Early Development Camps,” he says. “The energy at these events is a reminder of the great work players, parents and coaches have done to elevate tennis. The kids—whether beginners or experienced—are always looking for ways to improve. As a youth tennis coach, my goal is always to make sure the kids understand it’s their sport.” — Christine Nip

Smooth Moves

Tennis pro Sheldon Kennell has seen many families move between Hawaii and the U.S. mainland. That’s why he adopted Net Generation—to provide consistency and continuity to junior players, regardless of where they live.

A 20-year coach, Kennell was recruited two years ago to lead the tennis program at the prestigious Oahu Club. He first heard about Net Generation last year and quickly became an early adopter because of its streamlined curriculum.

“A lot of players come and go, but as long as they find a Net Generation facility, it will make sense because everybody is on the same page,” Kennell explains.

And as Net Generation grows, families in transition will gravitate toward a familiar program.

“The USTA put its heart and soul into Net Generation,” Kennell says. “I want my kids to be successful and happy, and this is the vehicle to do that.” — Christine Nip
**NEW ENGLAND**

A Flexible, Free Resource

Net Generation ambassadors Dave Colby and Kendra Becker embody the spirit of junior tennis every day, and they go out of their way to ensure kids are enjoying the sport. Both were early adopters of Net Generation.

“There are many useful parts of Net Generation, and this flexibility is a huge asset,” says Becker, who is the director of junior tennis at Intensity in Norwalk, Conn. "Some days, I use the curriculum, some days I use the assessments, and every day I teach, I’m keeping the competencies in mind for all levels."

“I’m excited to be a promoter of Net Generation,” adds Colby, the director of junior tennis at the Manchester Athletic Club in Manchester, Mass. “This is something that is a free resource for teaching professionals, so it is easy to promote. It is important for coaches to be watching drills and others’ approaches to teaching the game. The Net Generation content has been mined from coaches across the country, and it is free to use.”

—James Maimonis

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**MIDDLE STATES**

Collaborating with Schools

As an English teacher for 35 years, Debbie Pickens knows what students need. So when she had a chance to bring her passion for tennis to schools, it was a no-brainer.

Pickens is president of the Wheeling Ogelbay Tennis Club in Wheeling, W.Va., and she’s been connecting her programs with local schools for years. The collaboration through USTA has helped train dozens of teachers, while putting racquets into the hands of hundreds of students.

Now, through Net Generation, the school collaboration has meant more free equipment, lesson plans and giveaways for the schools. Through her community volunteers, Pickens is introducing the sport of tennis to hundreds of kids of all ages.

“Working with the schools and introducing the game of tennis to kids just makes sense,” she says. “And bringing them together and showing them ways to play outside of school is very important to us.”

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**CARIBBEAN**

A Unified Experience

For Net Generation trainer and ambassador Daniel Caballero Valcárcel of Puerto Rico, it’s important to have trainers, parents and children work together to develop young players in a structured, safe and fun environment.

As a head coach, Valcárcel likes that Net Generation provides curriculum for his staff, and requires that they are verified by Safe Play. "We have access to plenty of tools to present consistent lesson plans for ages 5 to 18,” he says. “Parents can also get involved in this platform.”

Valcárcel uses the phone app to find curriculum, assessments, drills and other information, along with videos, games, conditioning tips and exercises. Net Generation also has provider webinars, including instruction in Spanish.

“I’m looking forward to delivering on- and off-court workshops for coaches so we can continue to grow this sport,” he says. “It’s great that Net Generation brings everything together.”