



Can \$5 Really Make A Difference?

Small gifts create big impact through USTA PNW Youth Scholarships.

Sanja Lemes knows first hand what it takes to pursue a tennis dream. Lemes, who currently serves as the Director of Tennis and Delivery for USTA PNW, immigrated to the United States at the age of 16 when her family fled war-torn Croatia.

Not only has she been on the receiving end of tennis scholarships, but she has seen first hand families having to cut out activities for their children just to make ends meet. “I know so many kids who play for their high school tennis teams and want to have the chance to play year round to develop their skills, but their families can’t afford it,” said Lemes. “Knowing that we, as a tennis community, have a chance to provide playing opportunities to these kids is truly special.”

As tennis participation continues to grow in the Pacific Northwest with an estimated 1.1 million active tennis players calling this section home.

The number of players in our region has increased, on average, nearly 15% each year since 2017 – the highest rate of any USTA section & double the national average. For younger players, ages 6-12, the number of players in our section is twice as high when compared to the national average for the same age group.

As a result, far too many kids who love the game of tennis struggle to find the resources to pay for access to year-round tennis instruction. In some cases, they may decide that the cost of pursuing their tennis interests is simply out of reach.

Gifts of any size help fill the funding gap

One vital resource that USTA PNW uses to support kids and families who don’t have the financial resources to play tennis year-round is the PNW Opportunity Scholarship. Unlike many sports scholarships that focus on athletic ability or performance, the PNW Opportunity Scholarship is based solely on financial need and available to any child, at any level, in any location throughout Oregon, Washington, Alaska and Northern Idaho.

One of the most powerful things about the PNW Opportunity Scholarship is that gifts of all sizes—from \$1 to \$1,000 —have helped create critical mass in increasing the impact of this scholarship. In fact, if every PNW league player made an annual \$5 donation it could add up to over \$100,000 to support this unique scholarship fund and provide play opportunities to low or income restricted families throughout the PNW!

Adelynn Case, a high school student, who grew up in a large family in Tacoma, WA, has been a beneficiary of this fund. Her mother Carrie said “tennis was the only thing she (Adelynn) ever really enjoyed, and having three other kids... It got expensive, so we really appreciated the help.”

This past year, USTA PNW provided over \$50,000 in scholarships to more than 540 kids ages 5-17.

Play it Forward

News from USTA Pacific Northwest Section

Click on a pop-up, make a gift of \$5

One unique way to contribute to this fund is a pop-up that appears when you register to play in any USTA PNW League Section Championship with the pop-up offering this prompt: "Yes, I'd like to make a \$5 donation" to support the growth of USTA Pacific Northwest Tennis.

Rhonda, who plays in the Northern Oregon Adult 55 & Over league, has clicked on the league registration pop up. "It has been a very easy choice for me," said Rhonda. "Tennis is important and I was happy to donate to fund tennis programs in the community."

You can join the effort and help transform lives through sport by making a gift of any size to the PNW Opportunity Scholarship by clicking [here](#). Or contact Monica Baker at mbaker@pnw.usta.com