

LIFE ADVANTAGE  
TENNIS & TUTORING

In February 2001, Peninsula Covenant Community Center launched an outreach program to provide academic and athletic assistance to students at McKinley Institute of Technology School in Redwood City. Life Advantage Tennis and Tutoring (L.A.T.T.) was created to offer free tutoring and tennis instruction to middle school students who showed a desire for extra academic support and an interest in tennis as well as had a financial need.

L.A.T.T. was founded by Sid Newcomb, Tennis Director at PCCC, who had a passion to help the Hispanic community at the school-age level. Upon learning that many Hispanic students at McKinley school were limited in their English abilities, Sid created a program to incorporate his proficiency in Spanish along with his experience as a tennis professional. It was modeled after a similar English-tennis program at Stanford University with East Palo Alto students.

Now in its fifth year, the program provides one hour of tutoring and one hour of tennis twice a week, expanding over six months during the school year. Sid and his team of volunteers tutor and coach the students on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons at Sequoia High School, which is two blocks away from McKinley school. Afterwards, they are driven home in L.A.T.T. vans. Volunteers donate over 144 hours per school year.

The success of the program is evident by the enthusiasm of the students and the growing waiting list of interested participants. L.A.T.T. was recognized as the 2002 Charity Event of the Year for this region from the United States Professional Tennis Association, Northern California Division. Furthermore, the program received the Community Outreach Tennis Award from the Siebel Open in 2004.

Thanks to the faithfulness of volunteers, the program expanded from 12 to 18 students last year. However, with additional tutors and funding, more students can participate in the program. Tutors do not have to play tennis nor speak Spanish. A desire to serve and English skills is all the requirements. If you are interested in helping with L.A.T.T., call Sid at 650-364-6272.

Lynda Allen  
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