

# ADVOCATING FOR: DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE TENNIS

*Advocacy for tennis involves taking our knowledge and passion for tennis and connecting it to the needs of communities, schools, colleges, and local governments. Advocacy is the ability to demonstrate to decision-makers how tennis programs can benefit the community.*

## INTRODUCTION

**Tennis strives to be an inclusive sport.**

At the USTA, inclusiveness is one of our core values. We believe that anyone from anywhere should be able to play and compete equally and fairly in a sport that is open and welcoming to all.

## KEY POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Connecting with diverse communities is vital to the growth of tennis, particularly as the U.S. population becomes more racially and ethnically diverse.
- Diversity can be considered across many variables: age, race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic, physical and cognitive ability, nationality, military status, and religion, among others.
- Advocating for tennis in your community can help increase participation in the sport from people of all backgrounds and diverse experiences.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

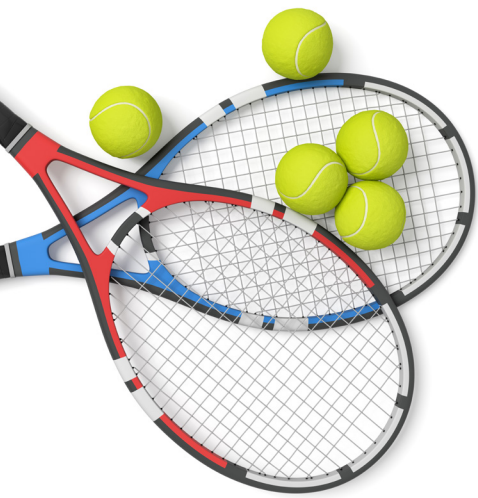
- The U.S. is diversifying even faster than predicted, according to data from the latest census. Racial and ethnic minorities accounted for the nation’s overall growth over the past 10 years.
- U.S. tennis participation surged in 2020, with nearly 3 million new players joining the sport. This represents an excellent opportunity to capitalize on the momentum with effective programs, initiatives and advocacy that capture the local, grassroots nature of this sport.



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To get started, contact your local USTA representative, or go to

**USTA.COM/  
DIVERSITY**

for tools and resources on starting a tennis program in diverse and under-represented communities.

## CHALLENGES

- Despite being a group that watches a lot of tennis, diverse populations are less likely to play than many other groups.
- Access to quality courts, equipment and consistent instruction in many diverse communities is still a challenge.
- Under-represented groups are also more likely to report feeling marginalized and unwelcome in the sport, despite the industry's efforts to be more open and inclusive.

## TACTICS TO ADVOCATE FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

With your help, we can make sure the sport of tennis remains relevant, accessible, and welcoming to all for generations of players to come. Here are some ways to advocate for tennis among diverse and under-represented groups:

- **Learn about the community.** Make an effort to understand the broader issues and barriers to playing tennis that various groups face. This will help a tennis advocate better understand how they can effectively support those communities.
- **Leverage your expertise.** While it is always important to know as much as you can about the community you are trying to engage, you don't need to be an expert in their culture. You are already an expert in tennis — and that should be your entry point into any new community.
- **Partner up.** Finding a local partner can help you build stronger connections to diverse communities. Start by reaching out to your USTA contacts, CTAs, and organizations within the community you want to engage.
- **Reflect the community.** Having diverse advocates is always a powerful way to make diverse audiences feel welcome and a part of the sport. The more you can get additional members of a community involved, the more you can reflect diversity.

For more information, visit the USTA's [Engagement Guides](#), which were designed to reach out to key segments vital to the growth of tennis across the U.S.

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