

# Colleges, Universities & Tennis on Campus (TOC)

## COLLEGIATE COMMUNITY HUBS

The USTA has developed a plan to assist universities in activating their tennis venues locally while adding a new revenue stream to an athletic department. The purpose is to engage the community, faculty and staff by offering robust programming, lessons, tournaments and social leagues. By doing this, you have increased your fan base, philanthropic development and donor/sponsor relationships, and connected academics to athletics, media and revenue streams.

College and university tennis venues can be excellent assets to connect to the community and become sources of additional revenue while not impacting university priorities. Tennis is a connective tissue to faculty, staff, the student body and the community. The USTA has the tools, resources and expertise to assist colleges with the creation of proven revenue driving and community-engaging programming, membership and seasonal court time plans.

### Resources

[Collegiate Venue Community Hub Playbook](#)

## TENNIS ON CAMPUS

### What is TOC

Tennis On Campus is the US Tennis Association's program for college club tennis players. It has been designed for and organized by college students who want to stay involved in the game, make friends, and compete in events all around the country.

Over 300 colleges and universities participate and compete in the program with more than half of them competing to make it to the National Championship.

### Who can play

Any student (including undergraduate and graduate) currently enrolled in their university can play club tennis. Your school may have specific rules, so be sure to check with them.

To play in USTA Tennis On Campus Championship events, players will also have to meet certain eligibility guidelines.

### Why should I play

Tennis On Campus is the best way to meet new people and continue playing in college! With over 100 events across the country a year, you can travel with your team or just play on your own campus.

### How do I find a team

You can search for your university's team profile to get in touch with the captain of the team or visit your school's campus recreation page to see if there's a club tennis team.

No luck finding a team at your university? Why not start one? The USTA is here to help you get a team started with start-up grants and other resources.

## [Advocating for college tennis](#)

The USTA has developed a plan to assist universities in activating their tennis venues locally while adding a new revenue stream to an athletic department. The purpose of these “Collegiate Community Hubs” is to engage the community, faculty, and staff by offering robust programming, lessons, tournaments and social leagues.

### [How to turn your tennis venue into a collegiate community hub](#)

### [USTA guide to tennis on college campuses](#)

There are many reasons why students play college tennis—whether in a varsity tennis program or in a USTA Tennis On Campus program.

For many junior players coming out of high school, a tennis scholarship can provide an opportunity for a college education that may not have been possible otherwise. There are also many associated benefits that playing tennis can offer to college students—staying fit and healthy, making friends and social connections, having a chance to take a break from studies and more.

Tennis during a person’s college years also is an important bridge to continuing on in the sport through their 20s, 30s and beyond. That was one of the key reasons the USTA instituted the Tennis On Campus program more than 15 years ago. Tennis On Campus offers tennis players who do not play varsity tennis a structured opportunity to continue on in the sport.

The importance of college tennis facilities goes beyond the use by students during the school year. Courts at colleges also are used by community members, and often these same courts host tennis camps for youth during the summers.

One of the challenges facing collegiate tennis today, however, is that administrations are cutting varsity tennis programs—which usually means losing the tennis facilities, too. Often, by the time the varsity tennis coach, team members and the tennis community learn a program is in jeopardy, it is too late to implement strategies to save it.

Strategies to increase a tennis program’s relevance to the college or university should be developed with college coaches and communities before programs are jeopardized. The key is to advocate, educate and encourage coaches, athletic directors and college presidents to develop long-term, meaningful community outreach programs on their campuses. By linking the campus and the community together, it’s easier to build a constituency that helps protect and grow college tennis.

## **SAVING VARSITY PROGRAMS**

The threats to varsity tennis programs are a localized issue, unique to each campus. If your local college or university program is threatened with cancellation, however, you have nationwide resources available to you to help bring the situation to a positive resolution.

### **What should you do if you hear that a program is in jeopardy?**

- Communicate with your tennis and general alumni.
- Form a core group to serve as the brain trust to direct the campaign. It is likely that this core group will do the majority of the legwork.
- Communicate with your current team members and their parents.
- Reach out to influential members of your community.
- Reach out to your booster club members and to influential tennis alumni.
- Research the financial situation of your athletic department. Know the relationship of your team budget to the overall athletic department budget.

- Ask for and try to schedule meetings with your university administration (President, Board of Trustees/Regents, Athletic Department, etc.).
- Find contact information (name, mailing address, phone number, email address) for all decision-makers with relation to this issue and provide this to your boosters, and members of the community.
- If the tennis program is a member of the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA), a team representative, preferably the coach, should inform the ITA that the program is in jeopardy. The ITA is both the governing body and coaches' association for NCAA Division I, Division II, Division III, NAIA and Junior College Tennis. If you believe it would be helpful to have letters of support from the ITA to the President, Board of Regents/Trustees and/or Athletic department, please contact ITA COO David Mullins ([dmullins@itatennis.com](mailto:dmullins@itatennis.com))

### Emphasize the value of college tennis

- Attracts new students
- Showcases top student-athletes
- Enriches student life
- Builds relationships
- Generates revenue

### What the USTA can do

- The USTA will write a letter of support to the President, Board of Trustees/Regents and/or Athletic Department.
- The USTA Section will assist with your local campaign.
- The USTA may provide a representative(s) to attend key meetings, whenever possible.
- The USTA will help to identify influential people who might help.
- The USTA may be able to provide some stop-gap, emergency funding.

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