



29th Annual Eastern  
Tennis Hall of Fame Celebration

to benefit the

Junior Tennis Foundation  
Grant and Scholarship Programs

## 2016 David N. Dinkins Scholarship Award Winners



### Kai Yuminaga

Kai Yuminaga, a freshman at Benjamin Cardozo High School in Queens, N.Y., started playing tennis when he was five years old. This spring, he will compete for the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) varsity team and Mayor's Cup as a singles player. Academically, he is part of the honors program in math and science.

Yuminaga trains through New York Junior Tennis and Learning (NYJTL) at the Cary Leeds Center in Bronx, N.Y. He is ranked No. 39 in the boys' 14s in the Eastern Section and finished in fourth place at the boys' 14s Empire Cup. Outside of tennis, Yuminaga likes listening to music and playing games with friends. His dream is to play tennis at Columbia University but would be happy to play college tennis at any Division I or Division III program.

As a volunteer, Yuminaga has participated several times as a ball boy at the National Indoor Intercollegiate Championships held at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center.



### Maria Kogarova

Maria Kogarova is a senior at The Beacon School in Manhattan, N.Y. She began playing tennis 14 years ago at a New York City park and has not stopped playing since. Kogarova has been part of the Bogdana Romanski School of Tennis since 2002. She was also part of the City Parks

Foundation's Reebok Summer and Winter Academy from 2009 to 2013. Kogarova is currently in the City Parks Foundation's Lacoste Summer and Winter Academy, where she has participated since 2013.

Kogarova has also been on her high school tennis team since she was a freshman. Her team was the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) champions from 2012 to 2014 as well as the Mayor's Cup champions in 2013 and 2015.

In addition, Kogarova participates in the Young People's Chorus of New York City and a Russian Folk Ensemble. Academically, her favorite subject is science and she is currently taking two science classes: marine biology and anthropology.

## Leslie Allen



Photo credit: Kyle Copeland-Muse

Leslie Allen, a native of Cleveland, Ohio, has been a role model in tennis for more than four decades. While competing on court, working off court as a tennis executive or giving back to the game, Allen's mantra remains: "tennis is more than just hitting a ball."

Ironically, when introduced to tennis by her mother, Sarah, an avid tournament player, Allen was not interested. Despite prodding from her mother, encouragement by coach

Robert Ryland and two stints at Dr. Robert Johnson's camp, Allen quit tennis at age 11 never pursuing a USTA junior ranking.

In 1973, in the midst of the tennis boom, during the founding of Women's Tennis Association (WTA), World Team Tennis, Virginia Slims Tour and the passage of Title IX, the high school senior dusted off her tennis racquet and played on her school's boys tennis team. When refused entry into the state tournament because she was a girl, Allen made history when the Ohio Athletic Association ruled girls could compete on boys teams in non-contact sports.

Reluctantly, she accepted an academic scholarship to Carnegie Mellon University and played on the school's women's team. However, she still dreamed of combining stellar academics and Division I athletics.

That summer, she decided to leave Carnegie Mellon University and developed her five-year plan of becoming a world class player. This would become a pivotal point in her career.

"My journey was atypical," Allen said. "Many told me I was too old to become a pro, emphasizing I had no junior tournament experience."

Undeterred, Allen, that summer of 1974, trained at Port Washington Tennis Academy with Harry Hopman.

"Training at Port was a seminal moment in my development," Allen said. "It was the first time I trained regularly and focused on fitness."

Another key component in her plan was coach Arvelia Myers of the Pyramid Tennis Association (PTA) in Harlem, N.Y.

"Ms. Myers was someone who saw something in me," Allen said. "She continually helped me get to where I wanted and needed to be."

In the fall of 1975, as a college junior, Allen walked onto the women's tennis team at the University of Southern California (USC), where she played No. 6 singles for two seasons. Her team also held the No. 1 ranking and were national champions.

"I was on the bottom of the ladder, but I was practicing with the best players in the country," Allen said. "When I started beating my teammates in practice my five-year plan was beginning to take effect."

Allen graduated with honors from USC and won the American Tennis Association National women's singles title that summer securing a wild card into the US Open qualifying.

Ms. Myers' PTA sponsored her for three months on the Australian circuit where she earned her first WTA world ranking of No. 170 in 1978. Allen upped her resolve with tutelage from tennis legend Althea Gibson who in 1979, insisted, "You need to think about winning WTA tournaments."



In 1981, at the Avon Championships of Detroit, Allen became the first African-American woman to win a major pro tournament since Gibson's US Open victory in 1957. Allen reached a singles world ranking of No. 17, won a combined nine singles and doubles WTA titles and was a French Open mixed doubles finalist.

Off court, Allen has held several roles in tennis, including WTA tournament director, television media relations manager, motivational speaker, winning high school and Division I college coach,

fundraiser and professional athlete development specialist.

"As a rookie on tour Billie Jean King taught me it was our responsibility to give back to the sport," Allen remembered. "I was elected to the board as a player and later as a business professional who understood both the on-court and off-court perspectives."

She founded the Leslie Allen Foundation's Win4Life program in 2002, which teaches young people how to succeed in life on-and-off the court and provides insight into the careers behind the scenes in pro tennis.

"On all levels, whether you're an elite athlete or novice, there is a lot of opportunity in tennis outside of just hitting the ball," Allen said. "There are a multitude of rewarding careers in tennis that anyone could have for a lifetime."

Allen currently lives in Morristown, N.J. where she works at West End Residential as a real estate professional and travels extensively as a motivational speaker.



Above left: Leslie featured on the cover of several prominent tennis magazines. Above right: Leslie competing at the US Open in the early 1980s. Photo credit: Cheryl Treadley.

## Marcel Freeman



Marcel Freeman, a successful tennis player from a young age, continues his journey as a teacher almost 40 years later.

"I wouldn't be the person I am today without tennis," Freeman said. "Through competing and traveling, I've learned so much about myself as well as several life lessons."

Freeman, a native of New Bedford, Mass., moved to Long Island shortly after he was born. He started

playing tennis when he was five years old, just before winning his first official tennis racquet in a raffle. As a junior, he trained at the Port Washington Tennis Academy in Port Washington, N.Y. for three years.

"There is something very special about Port Washington," Freeman said. "The development program leader, Harry Hopman, had such knowledge, passion and intensity for the game."

Immediately following Port Washington Tennis Academy, Freeman trained at the Roslyn Racquet Club in Roslyn, N.Y. Freeman played under Rick Elstein, someone he considers to be one of his greatest mentors.

"Rick was there for me when I left Port Washington," Freeman said. "Without his tutelage, guidance and friendship I don't know if I would have been as successful."

Freeman also credits his success in tennis to the remarkable coaches he had starting as a junior and continuing throughout his career. Some of these coaches included: Ron Holmberg, Don Brosseau, Ray Wilson, Peter Marmureanu and Vic Braden. He became a No. 4 nationally ranked junior and No. 1 in the boys' 12s and 18s in the Eastern Section.

Freeman went on to play tennis at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) from 1978 to 1982. He excelled under the disciplined coaching of Glenn Bassett and Ron Cornell. While at UCLA, Freeman had the opportunity to train with several accomplished former UCLA players, including Brian Teacher and Jimmy Connors.

"At the end of my junior year I became No. 1," Freeman said. "I won National Championships my freshman and senior years, but leading my team and playing No. 1 singles was even more gratifying to me."

Freeman was an All-American all four years at UCLA and was named the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) National College Player of the Year his senior year. He was later inducted into the ITA Men's Collegiate Tennis Hall of Fame for his exceptional play at UCLA.

Due to Freeman's collegiate success, he was a member of the United States Davis Cup team in 1982. He considers being part of the team one of

his fondest moments as he was the practicing partner for John McEnroe.

Although Freeman decided to play professional tennis prior to his graduation, he later finished his degree at UCLA after approximately eight years competing professionally.

"When I was a college player I transitioned into pro tennis," Freeman said. "I was 21 years old, and it was always my dream to play."

Despite battling several injuries throughout his professional career, Freeman earned a career-high world singles ranking of No. 46 in 1986. Some of his best victories were against Stefan Edberg, Harold Solomon, Tim Mayotte, Juan Aguilera, Ilie Nastase, Johan Kriek and Peter Fleming.

"At the end of the day I am very happy to have made it through and into the top 50," Freeman said. "No one can take that away from me."

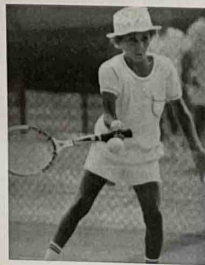
Freeman's best Grand Slam finish occurred at the US Open in 1986, where he reached the third round. As part of the Grand Prix tennis circuit, he reached the semi-finals of Australia's Queensland Open in 1988.

After retiring from professional play in 1989, Freeman used his mastered techniques to teach tennis. He has worked with several former professional players including: Lindsay Davenport, Mark Knowles, Chanda Rubin, Janet Lee and Martin Blackman, along with several juniors.

"While I worked with Chanda she got to No. 6 in the world," Freeman said. "I instilled a more positive belief system as part of the mental side of her game."

Freeman believes teaching provides the opportunity to empower others. He currently lives in Hollywood, Calif. and teaches tennis in Beverly Hills, Calif. at private courts.

"I've put in a lot of hard work and a lot of people have helped me along the way," Freeman said. "I'm grateful I've been able to do something I've been in love with since I was a little kid."



*L to R: Marcel at the Shelter Rock Tennis Club competing in a boys' 12 and under tournament in 1972; Marcel competing during his senior year at UCLA in 1982; Marcel playing against Ivan Lendl on Centre Court at Wimbledon in 1986.*

## Eric Fromm

Eric Fromm has devoted his life to tennis. As a former professional player and the current President/Managing Director of Christopher Morley Tennis and new programs held at Port Washington Tennis Academy, he truly understands both the competitive and business sides of tennis.

Fromm, of Roslyn Heights, N.Y., first picked up a racquet when he was 10 years old. He played his first junior tournament when he was 11 years old and earned his first ranking when he was 16 years old. He trained at the Port Washington Tennis Academy and competed on the North Shore High School boys' tennis team, where he played No. 1 singles and doubles for four years and built up a record of 58-1.

Fromm went on to attend college at Columbia University where he played tennis under Coach Butch Seewagen. Fromm played No. 1 for Columbia for two years, where he went undefeated in dual matches, before leaving to compete on the ATP tour.

"Under Butch Seewagen, I improved significantly in the two years I was at Columbia," Fromm said. "His record as a professional tennis player inspired me."

The first professional tournament Fromm competed in was the US Open with Seewagen as his partner. Through Seewagen, Fromm met several accomplished tennis mentors including Dick Savitt, Ham Richardson, Don Rubell and Paul Cranis who guided him on his professional journey. Fromm competed professionally from 1978 to 1985, where he achieved a ranking of No. 46 in the world.

"I worked so hard throughout my years as a junior and in college," Fromm said. "I wanted to give playing professionally a shot and ended up doing somewhat better than I expected."

In addition to his impressive ranking, some of Fromm's career highlights include defeating Yannick Noah at Wimbledon in 1981, Pat Cash at the US Open in 1982, Johan Kriek, Tim Mayotte and Peter Fleming. Fromm also reached the round of 16 in singles at the French Open in 1983 and the semifinals in doubles at the French Open in 1984.

"Playing and competing in tennis inspired me in every way," Fromm said. "The friends and experiences I've had through tennis are of enormous importance to me. To this day, when I see a tennis friend who I might not have seen for 30 years, it's like seeing a brother or a sister."



*Eric with his family.*

After his retirement from professional play, Fromm returned to Columbia to finish his undergraduate degree and earn his master's degree in business administration. Shortly thereafter, he received two community service awards from the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation for his involvement in programs for under-resourced children.

Fromm started his professional work in tennis at Sportime, where he worked as Chief Revenue Officer and Executive Managing Director for 15 years. He managed nine of Sportime's 13 facilities and launched three sites including its flagship Randall's Island facility. Fromm still has a significant financial interest in two Sportime clubs in Westchester County.

Just three months ago, following his tenure with Sportime, Fromm joined Christopher Morley Tennis, a 10-court indoor tennis club in Fromm's childhood hometown of Roslyn. Fromm now oversees Christopher Morley Tennis (CMT), the new CMT All-Sports Summer Camp in Christopher Morley Park and CMT at Port Washington Tennis Academy. In his role with CMT at Port Washington Tennis Academy, Fromm is thrilled to be working with the legendary Dick Zausner to attract new pros, programs and players to the Port Washington Tennis Academy where Fromm grew up playing.

"Other than my family, the sport of tennis has been the most important thing in my life for the past 50 years. Tennis has given me so much more than I ever expected," Fromm said. "Tennis has given me some measure of athletic success, many friendships and a business career that I love. I even met my wife through tennis during the Masters at Madison Square Garden."

Fromm's significant effort as both a player and business person in tennis have earned him a place in USTA Eastern's Tennis Hall of Fame. Although he does not compete on-court much anymore, he will never forget the people he has encountered along the way.

"This induction is a great reminder of every friend I've met throughout my 50 years in the game," Fromm said. "It represents years of amazing people and experiences."



*Left: Eric featured in the newspaper for defeating Yannick Noah at Wimbledon in 1981. Right: Eric competing professionally in the 1980s.*

## Loretta Van Raalte

Loretta Van Raalte, of Hartsdale, N.Y., has been a staple in tennis in the Eastern Section for more than 35 years. Her kind spirit, hardworking demeanor and love of the game are evident to anyone she meets.

She started playing tennis in 1978 when she took lessons with her friend June Marcus in Greenburgh, N.Y. Shortly after her first tennis lesson, Van Raalte began playing at the Hudson Valley Tennis Club in 1979, where she was introduced to the club's designer, builder and teaching professional, Jerry Alleyne. She quickly became interested in organizing tennis and took a job coordinating the Hudson Valley Tennis Club's leagues from 1980 to 1985. Van Raalte then was asked by Alleyne to be the club's director of tennis, a role she held from 1985 to 1998.

Van Raalte founded the Jerry Alleyne Memorial Foundation (JAMF) in 2000 following Alleyne's death in 1998.

"Jerry was just a marvelous human being and excellent tennis player," Van Raalte said. "When he passed away he had so many people who looked up to him so we wanted to carry on his legacy."

The JAMF was created to provide youth with the opportunity to learn tennis, integrity and life skills. The foundation allows young players to develop their skills in a fun and safe environment. As the current Executive Director of the JAMF Van Raalte continues to impact the lives of countless children throughout USTA Eastern's Southern Region.

Van Raalte began the JAMF programming, known as the JAMF Academy, with help from a few friends in Mount Vernon, N.Y. for approximately three years. The programming then moved to New Rochelle, N.Y. where it expanded into three-hour Sunday morning sessions. This winter season, which ran from October to May, Van Raalte hosted the JAMF Academy at Lifetime Athletic in Westchester County. Kids ages four to 18 years old traveled from as far away as Connecticut and Peekskill, N.Y. to participate in lessons and practice matches. In addition to the tennis programming, Van Raalte is known for bringing treats for the kids who participate in the early Sunday morning sessions.

"The program is so early, so I get stuff for the kids and they devour it," Van Raalte said. "A lot of them don't have time for breakfast so I like to make it extra special for them."



The JAMF also offers a summer program for kids from May to September at the Westchester Plaza Tennis Academy in Mount Vernon, N.Y. where Van Raalte volunteers every day. The kids learn from teaching professionals as well as former JAMF Academy students. Additionally, a Silver Sneakers program for seniors is offered throughout the summer.

"I think tennis is a good socializer," Van Raalte said. "Like Jerry always said, the stuff you learn on the court has great application in life."

Van Raalte's love for helping youth through tennis is unwavering as she continues to give back to her community through tennis and mentoring.

"There is a need out there and you just want to lend a helping hand," Van Raalte said. "It is rewarding. Almost 100 percent of my friends in New York I have met through tennis."

In addition to running the JAMF Academy, Van Raalte organizes Junior Team Tennis (JTT). She was a JTT coordinator for Westchester County from 2013 to 2016 and currently manages the JAMF's several JTT teams. The JAMF's JTT teams have seen success at the National Championships in recent years. In 2011, the JAMF's 18 and Under JTT team (Drop Shots) finished in seventh place. The team came back again in 2012 and won the championship by one point.

"The thing that really stood out to me was that the kids are just wonderful," Van Raalte said. "The other team thought they had won, but when both teams' captains went over the scores they realized our team had actually won. It was remarkable how the other team members conducted themselves. They had to be disappointed but showed nothing but respect for our team."



*Above right: Loretta during a practice session in Mount Vernon, N.Y.; Above left: Loretta on-court with kids during a summer clinic in Mount Vernon, N.Y.*

Although Van Raalte seems to drive the JAMF's success year-after-year, she credits the work of her peers for their support each day.

"The people I work with are fantastic and our Board of Directors is great," Van Raalte said. "Helping kids through tennis is a joy for me and the people are just spectacular."