

Dear Friend of Saint Paul Urban Tennis (SPUT):

What a year for SPUT kids! More than 2,000 young tennis players and future leaders improved their skills—both on and off the court—through our lesson programs, tournament play, camps and Warrior Leadership Academy. In addition, SPUT was able to expand programming for kids and families on the east side of Saint Paul by moving our headquarters to Eastview Recreation Center. Since then, more than 1,500 visitors have enjoyed open gym, family activities, free meals, and tennis lessons on the Eastview courts.

SPUT uses the game of tennis to teach leadership and life skills to students throughout Saint Paul, while not turning any child away for an inability to pay for our programs. Below is a letter from an exceptional student leader who benefitted from getting involved in all the opportunities that SPUT offers.

**Meet Kevin:**

*Hi, my name is Kevin Tran, and I am finishing up my first quarter at Stanford University. It's been quite the adventure, and I would like to thank SPUT and its supporters for everything you make possible for the kids of Saint Paul. My experience with SPUT has helped me discover my passions and values, and undoubtedly brought me to where I am today. I began playing tennis my freshman year at Harding High School. I nearly joined track, but fortunately the tennis community took me in. There was no way I would ever leave the family that I quickly became close with.*

*SPUT introduced me to many experiences that I never knew were out there. One of the greatest lessons I got out of SPUT was the value of community. Tennis was able to build that community for me, and through my years of high school I knew that I had friends and coaches in the tennis community who supported me and wanted to see me succeed. Fortunately, through SPUT I could play tennis year round with the Warrior Leadership Academy. Equipment and program costs never stopped my friends in SPUT and I from playing because SPUT makes sure that all kids are able to enjoy tennis no matter their background. Tennis helped me stay active while teaching me the value of sportsmanship and leadership. I had many opportunities to volunteer through SPUT, and I loved it because I was volunteering in areas I cared about. SPUT gave me the chance to explore community in a new light.*

*When I began coaching for SPUT it was my first job ever. I loved watching the kids improve every day and be so excited to play tennis. Off the courts, I got involved with SPUT's Youth Leadership Council. At our meetings we discussed ideas to better the tennis community in Saint Paul and get more youth introduced to the game of tennis. Having my thoughts heard made me realize that I have the ability to make change happen.*

*I am beyond grateful for the tennis community and the years of tennis I was able to enjoy. I still play tennis today and will continue to spread my love for tennis to others interested in the game! My experience would not have been possible without the support of SPUT's donors, coaches, and staff. Thank you for all that you do to support Saint Paul Urban Tennis.*



*On the tennis courts at Stanford University.*

*Networking with career professionals at a Warrior Leadership Academy event.*



*Sharing ideas at a Warrior Leadership Academy education workshop. Warrior workshops help students understand their personal and professional goals to prepare for college and career opportunities.*

SPUT is excited about the future when we see so many SPUT kids go on to achieve great things. We wish you much joy and peace this season as we embrace our loved ones - tennis players or not - and give thanks for our many blessings. Please keep SPUT kids in your hearts as you make your year-end giving decisions.

Warm Holiday Wishes from  
*The SPUT Family*



## About St. Paul Urban Tennis

Saint Paul Urban Tennis has spent more than 26 years teaching lifelong tennis, leadership and life skills to children and youth ages 4-18. Working with many community partners, we have increased participation and delivered the fun and joy of tennis to more than 50,000 youth. SPUT SPIRIT— Service, Perseverance, Imagination, Responsibility, Integrity and Teamwork— continues to be planted in every Saint Paul neighborhood.

SPUT remains dedicated to our core mission of bringing programming to all youth, regardless of their ability to pay. SPUT brings tennis to children just a short walk or bike ride from their homes, at more than 30 sites throughout Saint Paul. We offer spring, summer, fall and winter lessons and camps, with reading integrated into summer lessons for 5-8 year-olds.

Teens enjoy opportunities for high-level tennis instruction and leadership development through Junior Team Tennis and the SPUT Warrior Leadership Academy (WLA). More than 60 WLA high school men and women participate in tennis instruction and competition, off-court personal development workshops, career mentoring, and service experiences each year. They also have a seat at the decision-making table as members of our Youth Council.

In spring 2017, SPUT moved its headquarters to Eastview Recreation Center to provide more programming and connection opportunities for families on the east side of St. Paul. Neighborhood youth now enjoy tennis lessons, open gym for basketball, soccer and volleyball, college preparation workshops, and a safe place to do homework and hang out with friends.

