

# THE DTP CONNECTION

THE DENVER TENNIS PARK NEWSLETTER

## ADVANCING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

GABRIEL GUILLAUME



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Recently, the Denver Tennis Park engaged in a series of strategic conversations about where we are going, who we are going there with, and what success looks like as we pursue advancing youth development through tennis. One of the most important conversations we had consisted of clarifying our description of youth development. What we have learned is that depending on who you are speaking with, there are a myriad of descriptions of the term covering a wide range of topics from health to sportsmanship to professional development. The truth is that the more partners and communities we work with, the broader the set of characteristics there are in what defines youth development. We appreciate this; it is one of the reasons why establishing partnerships is so important. Through these many conversations and perspectives, we have landed upon our categorical description of youth development.

**We [the DTP] are seeking to advance the physical and mental health, academic proficiency, professional development, and positive social relationships through tennis to create extraordinary futures for all youth.**

This covers a lot, but not everything. Some of our partners, like **Struggle of Love Foundation**, is focused on inspiring and educating our future generation so that they can make a positive difference in the world's future. **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Colorado** is developing positive relationships that have a direct and lasting effect on the lives of young people. **The Challenge Foundation** helps smart, ambitious, and hard-working students break the cycle of poverty through educational opportunities. **Denver Public Schools** is committed to providing all students the opportunities to achieve the knowledge and skills necessary to become contributing citizens in our diverse society. And of course, there are many, many more. The point is that it takes a wide range of programs, visions, skills sets, and perspectives to advance youth development, and therefore the definitions and goals are different. Each of us have demonstrable and powerful impact, but when combined in an organized and collaborative effort, we can and are doing some very extraordinary things to support youth in the Denver area and beyond.

A lot has been discussed lately about the impact that the pandemic has had (and is still having) on our younger generations. From its negative impact on academics to some of the highest levels in suicide rates we have ever seen among younger teens, the last few years have created a crisis that requires *more listening, collaboration, and creativity* than perhaps any of us have ever had to do. In addition, research indicates that the adverse impact on youth is at much higher rates among under resourced communities and communities of color. As one of the newer organizations, the DTP is humbled to be a part of a team of youth development experts (many of whom are led by leaders of color) exemplified above and hopeful that we can collectively rise to address the challenges our youth are having.





# YOUTH & STAFF SPOTLIGHT BADREDDIN MESSAUDI

Meet Badreddin (Badr) Messaudi, a 17 year-old senior at Overland High School (Aurora). Born in Tripoli, Libya, Badr started playing tennis at the age of 12. Badr would accompany his dad to his matches and afterwards, his dad would teach him the tennis essentials. He loves the physical and mental aspects of tennis and the competition that comes along with the sport. Badr has been an active player in the High School Advance Development Program since 2020. In 2021, he joined the Denver Tennis Park (DTP) coaching staff as a part-time instructor, helping with our elementary classes and off-site tennis programs. He loves the supportive and collaborative environment of the DTP, both as a player and as a team member. "Everyone is so encouraging, nice, and willing to help," he says. "Working at the DTP has helped me develop coaching skills and has greatly

- FAVORITE TENNIS PLAYER:** Rafael Nadal
- FAVORITE SHOT:** Forehand down the line winner
- SINGLES OR DOUBLES:** Singles
- BEST TENNIS ADVICE YOU HAVE RECEIVED:** Have fun and take it easy!
- HOBBIES OUTSIDE OF TENNIS:** Playing soccer and track & field

built my self-confidence. I had the worst social skills before working at the DTP; now I am confident and comfortable talking in front of people!" In his senior year at Overland, Badr won the Boys Class 5A 1 Singles Regional Championship (Region 7) and placed in the top 8 at State. He is a member of the National Honor Society and a Daniels Fund Scholar with plans to attend CU Boulder in the fall. It's been a privilege to witness Badr's growth both on and off the court as a player, instructor, and young man. We wish Badr the best of luck in college and beyond!

## COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT COLORADO LIONS YOUTH ORGANIZATION

Our community partners play a vital role in connecting the Denver Tennis Park (DTP) with and building trust in the diverse communities of Denver. Colorado Lions Youth Organization (CLYO) has been an instrumental partner in Northeast Denver for the DTP. CLYO is dedicated to combating youth violence and mental health issues that affect East Denver communities, including Montbello, through sports, technology programs, and mentorship programs. The organization serves approximately 250 youth between the ages of 6-18 years old. Their sports programs include flag football, soccer, baseball, cheer and tennis. The Denver Tennis Park began a collaborative partnership with CLYO in August 2021 by partnering on a series of tennis camps in Montbello. The DTP's mission and vision is to bring tennis to underserved communities and build programs within those communities as another option for youth to succeed. The partnership between Colorado Lions Youth Org. and the DTP allows us to reach youth more effectively and uniquely build relationships with the families of Montbello and Northeast Denver. Board President Issiah Donalde, Jr. is an inspirational leader who shares his technology knowledge and passion for serving his community with youth to help them succeed. All Colorado Lions Youth Org. programs are fully staffed by volunteers; anyone who wants an opportunity to make a difference in a child's life is invited to join them! To learn more about volunteer opportunities with CLYO, contact [lionscoachissiah@gmail.com](mailto:lionscoachissiah@gmail.com).

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# DENVER TENNIS PARK'S INAUGURAL COMMUNITY FEST

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The Denver Tennis Park (DTP) held its inaugural Community Fest & Open House event on April 23rd at the DTP facility. The purpose of the event was to convene the many families, organizations, and supporters we have met through community-based programming in Montbello and Southwest Denver over the past year and introduce them to the DTP facility and our team. With nearly 150 attendees, the event brought together a wide range of ages, perspectives, and interests in a fun and youth-oriented environment, with the main message being that "The DTP belongs to you!". In short, everyone had fun - on the court, in the jumping castle, listening to DJ Ktone's tunes, eating our home grilled hot dogs and hamburgers... it was a blast all around!

We would like to thank the organizational partners that attended the event, including DJ Ktone and Ktone Cares Foundation, Colorado Lions Youth Organization, Struggle of Love Foundation, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Colorado, and the Challenge Foundation, as well as our funding partners Fuel the Drive Foundation, Daniels Fund, the Choksi Family, USTA Colorado, Colorado Youth Tennis Foundation, and USTA Foundation.

## DTP CALENDAR

**MAY 2 - 27:** ADULT UTR DRILLS SESSION VIII

**MAY 23 - 29:** LAST WEEK OF SESSION IV YOUTH PROGRAMS

**MAY 31:** SUMMER PROGRAMS BEGIN

**JUNE 4:** [USTA JUNIOR CIRCUIT: DTP ORANGE JUNE CIRCUIT \(BG 10U\)](#)

**JUNE 4:** [USTA JUNIOR CIRCUIT: DTP GREEN JUNIOR CIRCUIT \(BG 12U\)](#)

**JUNE 5:** [USTA JUNIOR CIRCUIT: DTP YELLOW JUNIOR CIRCUIT \(BG 14U, 16U, 18U\)](#)

**JUNE 17 - 19:** [LEVEL 6: DTP JUNIOR OPEN \(BG 12U, 14U, 16U, 18U\)](#)

**JULY 4:** HOURS: 9AM - 6PM; YOUTH PROGRAMS RUNNING AS SCHEDULED

**JULY 9:** [LEVEL 7: DTP BOYS JULY COMPASS TOURNAMENT \(12U, 14U, 16U, 18U\)](#)

**JULY 10:** [LEVEL 7: DTP GIRLS JULY COMPASS TOURNAMENT \(12U, 14U, 16U, 18U\)](#)

**All DTP youth tournament registrations are through USTA.**

Click on each tournament to view registration info!

## THANK YOU

We would like to thank our current major donors who make our mission possible!

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