



Day-long Celebration Welcomes **Champions Cup Boston** **Tenacity Students Have Opportunity to Meet and Play with Stars**

John Nimick, Event Coordinator

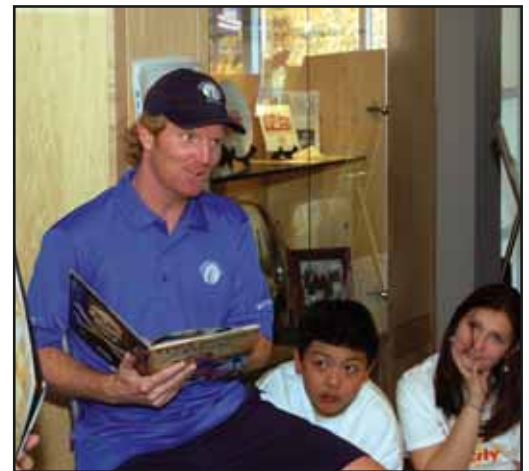
On April 26, 2006, Tenacity hosted *Champions for Tenacity*, a fundraiser and awareness builder—and also the kick off for the inaugural *Champions Cup Boston* tennis tournament taking place in Sudbury, MA over the following four days. The event consisted of a Youth Clinic, Pro Am, and Gala dinner that, all told, netted \$485,000 for Tenacity’s programs! *Champions for Tenacity* was presented by Fidelity Investments, co-sponsored by Intercontinental Real Estate, and supported by Alydar Capital, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, the Druker Company, Tudor Investments, Friends of the Joslin Diabetes Center, Joseph and Colin McNay, WCVB-TV5, and New Balance.

Youth Clinic

Legends of tennis mingled with the future of Boston on April 26th as nearly a dozen of the best-ever tennis professionals led an on-court clinic for 36 Tenacity students. Coming from all points of the globe, the *Champions Cup Boston* pros mixed with returning Tenacity tennis heroes such as Rosie Casals, Tim Mayotte, Mel Purcell, Tim Wilkison, and Bob Green. Rounding out Tenacity’s pro roster were Tenacity’s own Bud Schultz and *Champions for Tenacity* Co-Chairman Peter Palandjian.

The afternoon festivities began with the Tenacity tennis staff pairing up with our returning celebrity pros and a dozen Harvard varsity team members for drills and games on the six indoor tennis courts at Harvard University’s Murr Center. First of the big Champions Cup guns to join the fun were ATP Tour standout Aaron Krickstein and 4-time major champion Jim Courier, who had snuck in earlier for a little pre-Champions Cup practice!

The local Boston media, including Bill Littlefield from NPR’s Only A Game, Alice Cook from WCBS-4, and Hazel Mae from NESN,



Champions Cup Headliner Jim Courier participates in a Read-Aloud during the Pro Am portion of the festivities at Harvard

among others, turned out to cover the excitement. Other Champions Cup participants included last year’s Tenacity Pro Am star Todd Martin, as well as 7-time major champion Mats Wilander, ’87 Wimbledon winner Pat Cash, and Champions Tour pro Mikael Pernfors. The clinic buzzed with activity and featured different levels of play, but Jim Courier really turned up the heat on court 1 by taking on some of Tenacity’s best student players in actual points and games. Courier later said in an online journal: “I got to play doubles with a few of the kids in the program and they were awesome. Good players and lots of fun to be with.”

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A Message from Ned Eames



Tenacity President & Founder Ned Eames visits with star alumnus Richard Wilson and Mayor Thomas M. Menino at the Champions Cup Kick Off Gala

As Tenacity wraps up a successful school year, readies itself to provide our eighth summer of citywide reading and tennis, and enthusiastically continues to march toward serving 5,000 Boston students per year by 2009, I would like to thank all of our contributors, staff, and volunteers. We continue in this endeavor bolstered by the progress of our students and with a commitment to build bridges between neighborhoods and people.

Festive Spring Gala

On April 26th, in partnership with Jim Courier's InsideOut Sports & Entertainment and Bosse Sports, we enjoyed our largest and most successful spring fundraising extravaganza to date, *Champions for Tenacity*. The festivities began in the afternoon at Harvard's beautiful Murr Center with Jim Courier and many of his *Champions Cup Boston* legends including Mats Wilander, Goran Ivanisevic, Todd Martin, Pat Cash, Mikael Pernfors, and Aaron Kricktejn out on the courts providing a spirited clinic for sixty Tenacity after-school students. Adding even more spice to the on-court activities, these past greats, our students, and many of Boston's top business leaders were joined by long-time friends of Tenacity Bud Collins, Rosie Casals, Tim Mayotte, Mel Purcell, Tim Wilkison, and Tenacity's own Bud Schultz and Peter Palandjian. This afternoon of on-court instruction/

play and off-court literacy "Read-Alouds" set the stage for a 900-person festive gala that same evening at the Westin Copley Place. With the generous support of Mayor Thomas Menino, Fidelity Investments, Robert and Myra Kraft, Tom Hamilton of Aerosmith, Natalie Jacobson, Ron Druker, Kevin Phelan, and many other business leaders and community enthusiasts, Tenacity was able to realize a financial net of \$485,000 to help support our year-round literacy, life-skills, and tennis programming for 3,000+ of Boston's at-risk youth.

Excellence After-School

With the tremendous energy stemming from the *Champions for Tenacity* gala propelling us through the final weeks of the 2005-2006 school year, our high dosage *After-School Excellence Program* (ASEP) grew to serve 160 students at four indoor sites including Harvard University, the Reggie Lewis Track & Athletic Center, the Boston Athletic Club, and the Harborside Community Center in East Boston. ASEP enables carefully selected at-risk middle school students attending one of our seven partner schools to participate in our literacy, life-skills, and tennis program 3 afternoons a week, 3 hours each day, for 30 weeks each of their 6th, 7th, and 8th grade years. One measure of the success of ASEP is that, to date, not one graduate of ASEP has dropped out of high school!

Reading & Tennis in the Summer

In partnership with Mayor Menino's Recreation Department, we are now preparing to provide reading and tennis instruction to over 3,300 at-risk Boston girls and boys at 29 neighborhood sites. This seven week citywide program, offered Monday through Friday, 9am – 4pm beginning July 5th, will include a 25-squad tennis league that allows our students to experience being a member of a traveling team and to compete with their peers in virtually every Boston neighborhood. We also look forward to a variety of field trips, including a day-long experience on the courts and ocean at the beautiful Eastern Yacht Club in Marblehead. In addition, we look forward to being a charitable partner of the **Boston Lobsters** as the team embarks on what will be another fantastic season at Harvard University (*see opposite page for a special Lobsters - Tenacity ticket opportunity*). We are especially pleased that Todd Martin will be joining the Lobsters this summer!

A Special Thanks

As Tenacity continues to succeed in its effort to provide a pathway to excellence for Boston youth, I want to sincerely congratulate and thank Andy Crane and each and every program, operations, and development staff team member for their tremendous work over the past several years. Your work with our students and the community is truly inspiring.

Thanks, once again, to each of you who support Tenacity. We greatly appreciate your support and hope to see you on the courts this summer!

Ned Eames



Tennis legend Rosie Casals autographs a shirt for the evening's featured speaker, Carlos Lopes

After half an hour of tennis activities, Bud Schultz led a student farewell, followed by a group photo with Jim Courier. Tenacity students then departed for new activities: some to serve as ball boys and girls in the Pro Am, some to participate in the literacy group's Read Aloud upstairs in the Barnaby Gallery, and others to welcome the guests invited to watch and enjoy the afternoon activities.

Pro Am

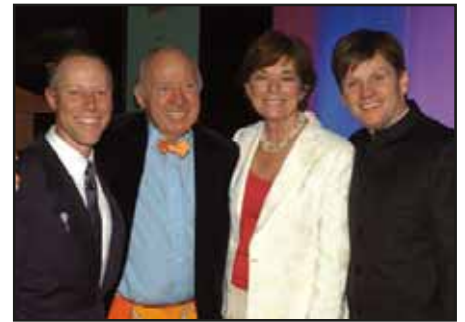
Veteran sports journalist and broadcaster Bud Collins then swung into action as official Host of the Pro Am by bringing all 36 amateur players out onto court 2 to meet the pros. After remarks from Harvard Men's Tennis Coach Dave Fish and Tenacity's Ned Eames, the Pro Am commenced. Each court was anchored by a pro and every amateur played through all six courts to ensure they captured at least ten minutes of tennis memories with each celebrity player. As they rotated through, all guests were individually photographed with Mats Wilander or Jim Courier.

For the next two hours, the Murr Center courts were awash with amateur talent, and even Tenacity student standouts Carlos Lopes and Bashiru Akinfolarin joined in the doubles action. During the first wave of the Pro Am matches, a real highlight took place upstairs in the Barnaby Gallery at the Murr Center. Fresh from the clinic, Jim Courier and 2001 Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic joined in a literacy group Read Aloud with twelve students, led by Tenacity staffer and literacy luminary Brian Tuttle.

Much to everyone's delight, Jim Courier was soon reading to the group, discussing topics with the kids, and fast becoming an honorary member of the literacy program staff! Adjacent to the temporary classroom setting of the Read Aloud were four easel displays created by Tenacity students to represent their work in the program. All attendees were asked to vote for a favorite, and the students who won were Anumita Das, Kevin Liang, Vincent Tang, and Atila Santos! As a reward, the winning display was featured that night at the Gala.

The day was a resounding success. Bud Collins kept all entertained via a wireless microphone and running commentary from the court floor. Two DJs kept the music pumping from the Murr Center sound system while lunch and ample support services kept all in

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Tenacity Board Chairman Larry Greenberg, Gala Hosts Bud Collins and WCVB's Natalie Jacobson, and Ned Eames

Support Tenacity and See the WTT Boston Lobsters!

Come out and support Tenacity while enjoying the excitement and top tennis of the Boston Lobsters this summer! After May 17, Tenacity will receive \$5 for any adult individual ticket and 10% on any season ticket or corporate package ordered online or by phone and mentioning **Promo Code: TENS** (Season or Corporate) or **TENN** (individual) at time of purchase. (This offer may not be combined with any other offer or discount.)

All Tenacity supporters who purchase tickets before July 12th will be entered into a special **Tenacity Meet Todd Martin Contest**. A lucky winner will be selected at random to win a pair of free VIP Box seats tickets to see the Boston Lobsters on July 22, two Lobster dinners, and Meet & Greet with Todd Martin. So go out and grab your tickets to catch the action of the Boston Lobsters! For a complete schedule and more details about the Lobsters and World Team Tennis, check out www.bostonlobsters.net or call 1-877-617-LOBS (5627).

For more information on this year's Lobsters team and a special message from Tenacity's own Larry the Lobster, turn to page Four of the newsletter.



New Season Brings New Faces

Larry T. Lobster

It has been a rather long winter for this lonely Lobster. Things just aren't the same without the fast paced action of my favorite Boston sports team . . . The Boston Lobsters! Fortunately, this July 6th is opening day for our Lobsters, and it looks like some big off-season moves have been made. In addition to bringing back yours truly, Larry T. Lobster, the team has held onto three of the most solid players from last year: coach Anne Smith is returning with fan favorites Thomas Blake and Kristen Schlukebir and mega-watt star Martina Naratilova!

The new faces are top additions as well and include last season's second place finisher in WTT singles, Amir Hadad, and Australian Nicole Pratt! But the big move, which has pleased a lot of people at Tenacity, is that the big guy himself, Todd Martin, will be

playing for the team this year! With a lineup like this, things at Harvard's Bright Arena will be HOT!

And speaking of things being hot, those of you who came to the matches last season may remember the arena being hot enough to boil any lobster! Well, since I prefer not being poached and to help make the season even more fun, I hear that this year there will be a climate control system at Bright Arena. Now there's *really* no reason not to come out in July and enjoy the most exciting tennis around!

See you all this summer,

Larry

The Lobsters Are Back in Town!

Anna Mickelsen, Office Manager

After appearing in the 2005 World TeamTennis (WTT) league finals last year, the Lobsters are returning to Boston for the 2006 season. Tenacity will once again be an Official Charity Partner of the Lobsters as they begin their home season at Harvard University's Bright Arena on July 6th, 2006. Led by tennis legend **Martina Navratilova**, playing WTT for her 18th season, the roster includes returning members **Thomas Blake** and **Kristen Schlukebir** as well as newcomers **Todd Martin**, **Amir Hadad**, and **Nicole Pratt**. Coach **Dr. Anne Smith**, 10-time Grand Slam Doubles Champion and former doubles world #1, will also return to lead the team.

Martin, a former U.S. Davis Cup team member and Olympian who reached #4 in the world singles rankings, collected numerous singles and doubles titles over the length of his career. He has also participated in several Tenacity events, including the recent **Champions for Tenacity Pro-Am** and **Champions Cup Kick Off Gala** on April 26th. Congratulations, Todd, on winning Champions Cup Boston! Hadad, who competed in 2005 WTT for the St. Louis Aces, is a past member of the Israeli Davis Cup and Olympic teams, while Pratt—also an Olympian—is one of Australia's premier professional players and has been ranked as high as #18 in doubles and #35 in singles.

Highlighting the 2006 Lobsters season will be a visit from the Sacramento Capitals and their featured player, former #1 doubles and top-ten singles player Anna Kournikova. World TeamTennis matches consist of five sets: men's singles and doubles, women's singles and doubles, and mixed doubles. The winning team is decided based on cumulative games won.

Schedule of home matches:

- Thursday, July 6 vs. NY Buzz (season opener)
- Sunday, July 9 vs. Sacramento Capitals featuring Anna Kournikova
- Tuesday, July 11 vs. Philadelphia Freedoms
- Friday, July 14 vs. NY Sportimes
- Wednesday, July 19 vs. Houston Wranglers
- Saturday, July 22 vs. NY Buzz
- Monday, July 24 vs. Delaware Smash



Todd Martin and Tenacity Kids

Tickets for individual matches are on sale now. Call 1-877-617-LOBS (5627) for more information or visit www.bostonlobsters.net. See the previous page for information on a special Lobsters ticket opportunity that benefits Tenacity!

Tenacity Superstars

After eight years of ASEP programming for middle school students, Tenacity has finally come to the point where many of our early students are graduating from high school and taking the next step: college!

We are proud to share some standouts from our Class of 2006 and their next steps:

<i>Renaud Alexandre</i>	<i>Northeastern University</i>
<i>Daniel Gonzalez</i>	<i>Amherst College</i>
<i>Jared Magee</i>	<i>Fordham University</i>
<i>Juan Malave</i>	<i>Salem State College</i>
<i>Colleen McGillicuddy</i>	<i>Northeastern University</i>
<i>Peter Ma</i>	<i>University of Massachusetts Lowell</i>
<i>Marcus Merisier</i>	<i>Eastern Nazarene College</i>
<i>Maalum Robinson</i>	<i>University of Massachusetts Boston</i>
<i>Reuben Rodriguez</i>	<i>Fisher College</i>
<i>Richard Wilson</i>	<i>Bunker Hill Community College</i>



Tenacity Superstars at the Champions Cup Kick Off Gala

Tenacity student Miguel Chavez wrote this essay in response to the Stay in School Writing Contest sponsored by the Boston Celtics earlier this year. Miguel won the city-wide contest and received an award!

Revived By Tennis

Three years ago when I was ten an accident happened when I was camping. I was in a boat. The boat crashed lightly against the dock. My hand was holding onto the railing and my index finger was between the boat and the dock. My finger got crushed. I remember the pain like a fresh wound in my body. The doctors tried to put my finger back on but it was too badly damaged. Since that day and moment I have not been the same.

After that I was always in a bad mood and I moped and I was down all the time. I was in such a state that people with a cheerful attitude bothered me. "Miguel, cheer up. Forget about it. It passed already." I'd only answer, "Leave me alone. It didn't happen to you, now did it?" I hated video games because I couldn't play because of my finger - imagine a kid who hates video games! And sports - I hated them too because I could not play them ever.

I would always stay home in the summer and never go with my family on trips to the park or to the pool. I would stay home and mope and sometimes cry. I would look out the window and think, why did this happen to me? Why did I lose my finger? Why? Why? Why? Some days I was feeling so bad I would not get out of bed.

That Fall in school I heard an announcement about something called Tenacity. I went to see what Tenacity was all about. I found out that the Tenacity program was about tennis. Tennis! I never gave it a thought but it did not look that bad so I gave it a try. I guess that this sport got my attention or maybe I was tired of moping and I did not realize it. I figured that this sport was right for me; you did not use your fingers that much - you just played. After that day I kept going back to Tenacity in my school. Tennis gave me my life back. I never felt like I was different from anyone again. Tennis makes me feel like a normal person again.

Now that Tenacity has helped me with my problem, I can play and feel good about myself. No matter what you look like or how many body parts you have, you will always find the right thing for you. Thanks to tennis I know that I can live like any normal person.



Miguel enjoying a Tenacity field trip

Champions Cup Kick Off Excitement!

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prime condition for their sixty minutes of legendary tennis. With visions of kick serves and inside out forehands dancing in their heads, nearly 200 clinic and Pro Am attendees retired at the conclusion to transform themselves for the *Champions for Tenacity* Gala dinner.

Gala

Boston was buzzing as over 950 guests arrived at the Westin Copley Place for Tenacity's inaugural *Champions for Tenacity Champions Cup Boston Kick Off Gala*. Guests were greeted by volunteers and teams of Tenacity staff and students, all lit up with "blinky pins" for the raffle sponsored by Long's Jewelers. Fidelity's special guests were ushered into a private reception in the Staffordshire Room hosted by Bud Collins and featuring Jim Courier, Goran Ivanisevic, Todd Martin, and Mats Wilander. Ned Eames welcomed many special guests to the Fidelity reception, most notably Robert and Myra Kraft, and Bud regaled the group with personal anecdotes about all the visiting pros.

Meanwhile, guests who made their way up the escalator to the general reception were treated to an incredible transformation of the America Ballroom foyer. The talents of Hopple Poppo, Tenacity's gala production company, were on display as images of famous tennis players and festive décor turned the room into a dazzling tennis-themed pavilion. The centerpiece of the foyer featured a plasma screen TV showing a picture montage of Tenacity students and program activity, while the winning ASEP display (blue ribbon attached!) and the three runners up stood proudly to each side.

Called to dinner, the crowd eagerly moved through the doors into a dazzling ballroom outfitted with 95 glittering tables, each of which featured a glass bowl centerpiece filled with tennis balls and topped with beautiful color-coordinated flowers. A 20' stage flanked by two ceiling height screens dominated the room. As guests settled at their tables, Bud Collins took the podium and welcomed each of the seven *Champions Cup Boston* pros in attendance to the stage. As an added treat for the audience, Bud hosted a brief interview with both Mats Wilander and Jim Courier. After also recognizing by name the Tenacity pros who were supporting the day, Bud turned the microphone over to Larry Greenberg, who thanked the many constituencies, especially Co-Chairs Kevin Phelan, Ron Druker and Peter Palandjian, involved in collaborating on *Champions for Tenacity*.

Then the lights dimmed and Tenacity's new, impressive video rolled on the screens. At its conclusion, Tenacity student Sherraine Rodney introduced Mayor Thomas M. Menino and offered some eloquent words about her background, family circumstances and progression, with Tenacity's help, from a directionless teenager to a freshman at Bates College. The Mayor spoke enthusiastically about Tenacity and the difference Tenacity is making in the city of Boston.

Ned Eames was scheduled to follow the Mayor to conclude the first part of the presentation, but lo and behold, the next person to walk up to the podium did not resemble



Hosts Bud Collins and WCVB's Natalie Jacobson Entertain the Crowd

Ned at all. In a fun surprise, Tenacity graduate Richard Wilson explained how meaningful it was to be a member of Tenacity and a friend of Ned's. With that said, he introduced Tenacity's President and Founder. Ned's remarks were memorable and emotional as he spoke plainly about his childhood, the influences that created his passion for helping less advantaged youth, and starting Tenacity.

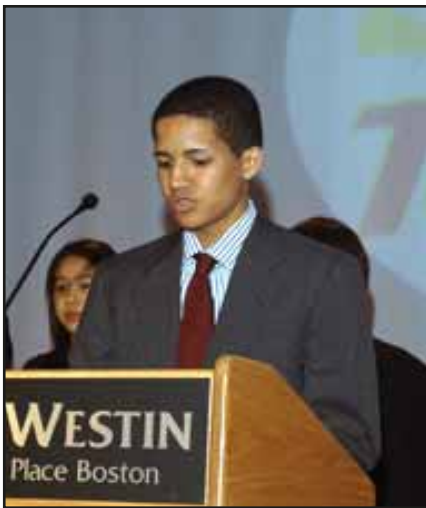
Natalie Jacobson, news anchor of WCVB-TV Channel 5, hosted the second part of the program with a warm and personal touch. Knowing many in the room and dedicated to philanthropic causes of many kinds, she easily captured the spirit of the night and the value of it on offer to Tenacity. After a brief welcome, she introduced Program Director Andy Crane, who brought with him to the stage eleven of Tenacity's successful students. Each student introduced himself or herself with an announcement about their school (or schools!) of choice for next fall while Carlos Lopes concluded the section of the program with an impassioned speech about his Tenacity experience. He wrapped it up by saying: "My story may be unique, but everyone on this stage could tell you one that would be just as compelling, and so could hundreds of other Tenacity students. If it weren't for everyone at Tenacity, there is no chance I would be where I am today." Carlos's speech earned him a standing ovation from the near-capacity crowd.

Natalie then returned to the stage to engage the audience in the fundraising section of the program, which revolved around the conclusion of the program raffle and the "Grand Slam Heaven" live auction. Drawing on the star power of the evening, Natalie asked Grand Slam finalist Todd Martin to pick the winning ticket for the \$7,500 Maurice Lacroix Grand Prize package, which consisted of a

Roger Federer signature, limited edition, gold and stainless chronograph watch, Wilson racquet, and 2006 US Open tickets.

Calling upon Bud Collins again, Natalie launched into the live auction. Thanks to the efforts of Bud, Natalie, and our featured tennis stars, the auction raised \$150,000 for Tenacity's programs! Items included trips to Wimbledon, the Australian Open, and the US Open (one of which included private jet travel and lunch in the USTA President's Box) as well as two special playing opportunities with Tenacity tennis heroes Rosie Casals and Tim Mayotte.

Finally, Natalie thanked all those who made *Champions for Tenacity* such a successful and memorable day, announced that the dessert buffet was open in the foyer and urged everyone to enjoy the rest of the evening. Gala guests emerged from the ballroom to find the foyer transformed into a nightclub and the James Montgomery Band blasting out the blues. With special guests like Aerosmith bass player Tom Hamilton joining in, more than 90 minutes of toe tapping music ensued as James capped off *Champions for Tenacity* with a high powered range of smoking tunes.



Featured speaker Carlos Lopes



Cooperative Discipline: A Community Approach to Behavior Management

Brian Tuttle, Academic Coordinator

This January, Tenacity was privileged to have Pete Desisto, world renowned education trainer, spend two days working with Tenacity staff to implement Cooperative Discipline, a widely successful behavior management strategy. While other behavior management styles emphasize a hierarchy of discipline with teachers at the top and students at the very bottom of the totem pole of power, Cooperative Discipline puts power into the students' hands, stressing student choice and ownership. The evolution from hierarchy to cooperation has been remarkable to see in our program.

Community is at the very center of Cooperative Discipline, a theme Tenacity can very much relate to. At the outset of the spring session, Tenacity students all over Boston discussed their role in their school, neighborhood, city, and Tenacity communities. The students themselves decided the goals they wanted to achieve over the semester and what behavior they did and did not want to see in the program. At our Harvard site in particular, I was overwhelmed with the amount of enthusiasm I saw; the students and I had had the same goals in mind all along, but it meant so much more to them when they were the ones setting the goals. Each day in our program, students choose the ways they will work toward their literacy, academic, and tennis goals. I am seeing the students become incredibly responsible time managers. I am also seeing them get an incredible amount of work done.

What is most amazing to me about Cooperative Discipline—as I observe it at our Harvard site—is seeing how well students can manage their own behavior when given the opportunity. On our very first day, students made a list of actions they did not want to see in their Tenacity program. They then came up with a list of consequences they were choosing to help enforce their rules. Now whenever I have a behavior management issue (which has become surprisingly rare) I walk with the student over to our Goals and Consequences Wall, where we discuss the consequences the student helped to create. The consequences are always constructive, often involving writing and reflection.

The kids themselves have put the most crucial element into their behavior management, the necessity of mentally processing through actions. They have no problem following their own consequences, because they understand the logic behind them. I don't often see second time offenders. The result is a more thoughtful, considerate, and interested student body. They are proud of what they have made. They are learning to own up to their choices. We have eliminated the educator/student conflict of interest, because everyone is working for the community we have built together. Cooperative Discipline has helped make the Tenacity community **our** community.

Tenacity Notes

We would like to give our special thanks to **InsideOut Sports & Entertainment** and **Bosse Sports** for enabling Tenacity to be a charitable partner of *Champions Cup Boston* 2006. We also deeply appreciate the efforts of **John Nimick** of **Event Engine**, **Barbara Quiroga & Associates**, **Robin Jones**, and **Hopple Pople**, for their parts in staging *Champions for Tenacity*. Huge thanks also go to our host for the celebrity Pro Am, **Harvard University**, and lead sponsors **Fidelity Investments**, **Intercontinental Real Estate**, the **Druker Company**, **Alydar Capital**, **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts**, **Joseph and Colin McNay**, the **Joslin Diabetes Center**, **Tudor Investment Corporation**, **New Balance**, and **WCVB-TV Boston**.

Tenacity especially appreciates the efforts of **Ron Druker**, **Peter Palandjian**, and **Kevin Phelan**, our 2006 *Champions for Tenacity* Co-Chairmen, and **Traci Little** and **Cynthia Dareshori**, our Event Team Co-Chairs.

Tenacity would also like to thank the following people and organizations for their important contributions to our efforts this past year: **City Sports**, **Quinn Printing**, **Longwood Cricket Club**, **Grand Slam Tennis Tours**, **Wilson Sporting Goods**, and **New Balance**. We would also like to thank **Ted Hoehn** and **Windridge Tennis Camps** for generously hosting a team of Tenacity students this summer.

We greatly appreciate the support of **Mayor Thomas M. Menino**, the **Boston Centers for Youth & Families**, and **Boston Parks & Recreation** as we prepare to deliver this year's **Summer Tennis & Reading Program** to 3,300 Boston youth at 29 neighborhood sites.



Celebrity chef Ming Tsai enjoys the fare at the Champions Cup Kick Off Gala

Tenacity and Sportsmen's Tennis Club Collaborate to Keep ASEP Running on Unique Schedule

Tyler Post, Tennis Coordinator

Forty budding middle school tennis players and no tennis courts. This is the terrifying reality faced annually by Tenacity's Reggie Lewis Center **After-School Excellence Program** (ASEP) site. From December through March of each year is when the blessing of being housed in a world-class athletic facility becomes a curse, as countless Boston track teams utilize the RLC fieldhouse for practice and meets throughout the winter track season, forcing Tenacity to look elsewhere for nine weeks of programming.

For five years, programming was postponed until our court access was restored in late winter, but last year we "stayed open" thanks to the Tobin Community Center's generous act of lending us classroom space for our study hall and their gymnasium floor for the tennis programming, where we erected a makeshift tennis facility for three hours a day from Tuesdays-Thursdays. However, the situation was far from ideal for our comprehensive ASEP programming. To solve this dilemma, Tenacity now transports thirty students three afternoons a week from the Curley middle school in Jamaica Plain to the Sportsmen's Tennis Club on Blue Hill Avenue in Dorchester, where we have access to three tennis courts between two and four PM.

This left the remaining issue of our 10 New Boston Pilot students, who as a result of their 9:30-3:30 school day have a unique Tenacity programming schedule. The New Boston study hall is conducted at school in the morning before classes get underway at 9:30am, making it the one aspect of programming unaffected by displacement from the RLC. Tennis for New Boston was done in two locations: at Sportsmen's two mornings a week before school, and at the Grove Hall bubble one evening a week. For morning tennis, Tenacity staff would pick students up at their homes, transport to Sportsmen's for tennis, then drop the angelic racquet stars off in time for homeroom.

Thanks to the successful collaboration between Tenacity's Ned Eames and Sportsmen's Executive Director Mercedes Tompkins, we are now able to hold our RLC programming throughout the school year!

Newsletter Staff

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Photos: Mark Sanderson, Allan Dines, Gabe Cohen-Leadholm, Tyler Post

Tenacity Students Conquer "World's Worst Weather"

Josh Katzman, Tennis Coordinator

With its reputation for having the worst weather in the world, Mt. Washington in New Hampshire can be an intimidating and dangerous place. It was with an intrepid spirit that Tenacity students ventured there twice this year, braving hurricane force winds and bitter cold on one trip, and enjoying the sublime alpine spring on another. Both trips presented great challenges and helped students grow as individuals and as a team.

The first trip began early on a Sunday morning in January at Harvard, with the thermometer holding steady around 12 degrees and the wind howling. As the intrepid Tenacity explorers drove north, the car's outside temperature gauge continually dropped, the winds raged, and the snow began. Reaching Mt. Washington five hours later was an achievement unto itself!



ASEP students Saquan Gual and Tyrone Li approach Tuckerman's Ravine

Still excited for their outdoor adventure, the students did not let the nasty weather keep them inside. Instead, the next two and a half days were spent bundled up in the cold. Highlights included reaching Tuckerman's Ravine and experiencing 100+ mile an hour winds, bushwhacking through the snow, and a stream crossing that saw one of the Tenacity chaperones emerge from the water as an instant-popsicle! Everyone finished the trip with windburn, smiles, and a great appreciation for Mother Nature.

In April, our second trip to the notch let the students experience the gentler side of the weather. Instead of vicious winds and frigid temps, we were met with beautiful, sunny skies and 70 degree weather. Highlights on this trip included another group making the five mile trip to Tuckerman's Ravine through slushy melting snow to watch spring skiing, *purposely* submerging ourselves into a stream fed by melting snow, and the purported danger of the local wildlife, especially the local rats and bats.

Both trips offered an experience for both students and staff to see a different, perhaps more relaxed side of each other and develop an even stronger bond. The students and staff want to extend all of our thanks to the great team from the Appalachian Mountain Club for their efforts and to the truly remarkable generosity of Bonnie and Ken Hargreaves, without whom we would never have been able to make it to Pinkham!

Boston College Students the PULSE of Tenacity

Erin Mullen, Literacy Tutor

My name is Erin Mullen, and I am a sophomore from Boston College. I have been working as a literacy tutor with the Tenacity program in East Boston since September. Working with Tenacity has been a unique experience for me and my fellow tutors from Boston College because we volunteer our time as a part of class that we take called PULSE. All together, there are 8 PULSE students that devote around 8-10 hours a week to the Tenacity program: six of us at East Boston, one in South Boston, and one at the Reggie Lewis Center. PULSE combines the studies of Philosophy, Theology, and other disciplines in the classroom setting with actual social service and social advocacy field work throughout the greater Boston area. This is a very unique opportunity because we are able to take the major themes and concepts that we develop in class and gain a firsthand understanding and a tighter grasp on these ideas in our placements. There are many different types of placements to choose from, and each PULSE student spends a lot of time selecting where they want to devote their time because it will be for over the course of the entire year. The fact that we devote our time to solely one placement throughout the year is very important because we are able to form strong connections with our students, supervisors, and fellow tutors. This is the first year that PULSE has teamed up with the Tenacity program, and hopefully this relationship will continue to grow and flourish over the next few years. I chose Tenacity because I believe that both literacy and staying active are imperative throughout life, and Tenacity is able to stress this importance in both a fun and educational way.

As I think back to that Tuesday in October when I took my first ride on the T from Chestnut Hill to East Boston, I remember how my emotions were jumping between excitement and nervousness. I was enthused to be getting off campus and throwing myself into a new project that would be very different from my regular day of classes. However, I was also nervous and anxious because I did not have much experience working in a program like Tenacity, and I was worried what would happen if I was not good at my job or if I did not like it. Before the start of program, I thought about how it could be difficult to be in the position of a tutor since we have to combine the role of being an authoritative teacher figure along with the role of a person with whom the students can talk and get to know on an equal level. However, as soon as I met them, the students and supervisors immediately put me at ease, and I realized that it would be much easier than I thought it would be. It is still difficult to find the perfect balance between these two roles, but it is a constant learning experience. Each day at Tenacity is different from the previous, and it is this lack of monotony that makes me look forward to the trip to East Boston.

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Staff Comings and Goings

We would like to welcome several new members of our staff team. **Lynn Walder** comes to us with a background of both for-profit and non-profit work, and recently launched her own engraving business. Lynn will be taking over the position of Office Manager at Tenacity for **Anna Mickelsen**, to whom we wish the best of luck in future endeavors. Anna did an amazing job for over two years as the hub of Tenacity. We regret to announce that our Development Coordinator, **Jeff Juell**, will also be leaving us soon. Jeff made great advances for Tenacity over the last year and a half working on the development of our fundraising efforts.

We would also like to announce the hiring of **Anne Greenbaum** for a new position, **School Year Program Director**, which will allow longtime Tenacity staffer **Andy Crane** to retire as full-time Program Director and focus on the **Summer Tennis & Reading Program** and the **ASEP Alumni Club**. Andy has been a mainstay at Tenacity from its inception and we are delighted that he will be staying with us in this capacity. Tenacity is now engaged in the process of hiring 120+ full-time seasonal workers for the summer under Andy's direction.

Anne Greenbaum comes to us with over 20 years of experience in the youth development field. For the past 10 years, she has worked in leadership positions as administrator and consultant, developing the full service school concept in Boston's public schools. Anne has conducted thousands of conflict resolution workshops for urban students and teachers in New England and across the country. She received her B.A from Bates College, a Masters in Sports Administration from The Ohio State University, and her MSW from Boston University. In addition to playing a variety of sports, she has coached youth and adult sports teams.

Tenacity Receives UWMB Grants

Sara DeMedeiros and Nicole Cassidy, Academic Coordinators

Tenacity has been very fortunate this year to receive two grants from the United Way Massachusetts Bay (UWMB). Tenacity has teamed up with UWMB as a partner in the “Today’s Girls...Tomorrow’s Leaders” (TGTL) initiative. Celebrating its 10th year in 2006, the TGTL initiative works to “build nurturing relationships for girls that will foster academic success and increase their ability to develop into responsible, involved members of society” (from the TGTL Mission Statement). As a TGTL grantee, Tenacity is being supported in offering gender-sensitive programming that recognizes the unique needs of girls by facilitating Girls Groups at each ASEP site, by offering girl-focused literature as part of its literacy curriculum, and by offering all-girl field trips and field days. In addition to programming, the everyday mentoring that is so central to Tenacity lines up with TGTL’s guiding principles that the resources and outcomes of partners be used to foster the healthy development of girls and address the inequities that traditionally limit girls.

Tenacity has also received a second grant from the United Way of Massachusetts Bay through the Connecting Schools and Afterschool initiative. This grant works to support and improve our communications and collaborations between Tenacity and the Mary E. Curley Middle School in Jamaica Plain. Tenacity staff has been actively working with the school’s Community Consortium and the RALLY (Responsive Advocacy for Life and Learning in Youth) to strengthen our partnership and play a larger role in the school community. Though support from these partners as well as mentoring, consulting, and training from UWMB, our services for our children have become even more comprehensive over this past year.

110 Students Compete in Tennis League’s First Year

Drew Hendrickson, Tennis Coordinator

For the first time in the history of the city, Boston has a middle school tennis league. In the first year of the league, all four Tenacity sites (East Boston, the Boston Athletic Club, Harvard University, and the Reggie Lewis Center) fielded squads and played a full schedule of both home and away matches. 110 boys and girls played in official league competition.

Tenacity Program Director Andy Crane said, “What I like about team tennis is that anyone who wants to play can play and many students who have been afraid to compete discover that it’s actually a lot of fun.” According to the league’s mission statement, “Team tennis drastically changes the way kids see the game of tennis. They instantly become part of a team with a common goal. Their enthusiasm goes way up because of their team matches, and they understand more clearly to what end they are practicing every day.”

Tyler Post, veteran tennis coordinator at the Reggie Lewis Center, said, “The tennis league gave the kids a way of measuring their own progress. They were always excited about playing. Some had trouble accepting a loss, but that was also valuable.” Each team in this co-ed league played a year-long schedule. The League’s commissioner and East Boston site leader, Drew Hendrickson, diligently recorded the results of each match, updated each team’s roster and tallied the league standings. “These matches build team solidarity within the sites and that keeps kids committed to the school year program,” said Crane.

Currently, the Harvard site sits atop the standings with a 7-5 record. The BAC is in second, East Boston in third, and the Reggie Lewis Center is in fourth. The regular season has only set the stage, however, for the playoff and championship battles that will yield the first-ever Middle School Tennis League Champions. “[The League] lent a narrative structure to the year,” said Rob Willison, site leader at the Boston Athletic Club. “It helped the kids at my site see the year as a narrative with a rising action [practice during normal ASEP sessions] and a climax in the future.” The champions will be crowned by the end of May and the championship trophy will be presented to the winning site at the closing ceremony. This trophy has been named the Crane Cup in honor of Andy Crane, who is stepping down from his post as School Year Program Director.

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I would have to say that my favorite part about working with Tenacity would be getting to know the diverse group of students. This happens to be the first year of Tenacity in East Boston, but the students have been very open and receptive to the developing program. While they of course are not perfect every day, they all have such unique personalities that I really love becoming familiar with. It is refreshing to be around middle school kids, especially when at college I am surrounded only by my age group for the majority of the time. When I first began tutoring at Umana-Barnes Middle School, I knew that I would be helping the students out by leading literacy groups and by prompting them to think more deeply about the main concepts and themes in the books and even in their everyday lives. However, I was not prepared for how much the students would be teaching me, and how much they would have an impact on my own life. For example, one of the boys always challenges me to speak Spanish with him because he knows I have been taking it at school for years, and I get excited when I can converse with him in Spanish. This may seem insignificant to some, but to me it is important because putting the skills I have learned in class to use in everyday life is essential. I love meeting new people and learning about new cultures, and the students at Umana-Barnes have been very open to sharing their own stories with me. In addition, it is awesome how many of the students genuinely care about what is going on in our lives and how our days have been. I have been inspired, saddened, amazed, shocked, and amused by the broad range of stories they have told me, and I look forward to my days at Tenacity because of these experiences.



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Champions Cup Star Jim Courier and Tenacity grad Bashiru Akinfolarin at the CFT Celebrity Pro Am at Harvard University