

Bridging the Gaps



Leaving a Legacy: An Experience with Tennis, Mentorship, and Child Development

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COMMUNITY PARTNER

Community Partner: Legacy Youth Tennis & Education

Main Site Location: 4842 Ridge Ave Philadelphia, PA 19129

Community Camp Site Locations: throughout the Greater Philadelphia Area

Legacy Youth Tennis and Education offers free and low-cost 7-week summer tennis camps at 18 sites throughout Philadelphia. Through the program, campers are awarded with tennis skill development, mentorship, and an opportunity to compete in the USTA's essay contest. Legacy's inclusive and affordable community camps promote the development of high-achieving athletes while simultaneously making fitness education and character development more accessible. Legacy's OST (Out of School Time) Program partners with local Philadelphia schools to provide safe and enriching childcare during the summer and after school.

Website: <https://legacyyte.org/community-programs/community-tennis-camps/>

TEAM'S EXPERIENCE

The Bridging the Gaps student interns were assigned to various Community Tennis Camp Sites such as Parkside, Allen's Lane, and Water Tower throughout the greater Philadelphia area. At community sites, interns collaborated with site directors, tennis instructors, and junior tennis instructors to help deliver tennis-centered programming including warm-ups, skill development drills, and group games. In addition, interns also spent time at the main Legacy Center, working on social media marketing, camper registration, and other behind-the-scenes administrative/organizational tasks that help the programs run smoothly.



CONTEXT

Sports Participation for Youth in Low-Income Neighborhoods

Barriers:

- Less access to parks & playgrounds
- Increased prevalence of violence & crime
- Transportation of children to and from activities
- Parent work schedule
- Cost of sports and programs

Benefits:

- Friendship development and increased social behavior
- Improved confidence and self-esteem that extends into daily life
- Improved mental health status (less depression/anxiety)
- Improved executive function (inhibitory control, working memory, cognitive flexibility)

REFLECTION

One of the most rewarding aspects of interning at Legacy was the opportunity to develop relationships with the campers and coaches. Over the 7-week camp, we got to see the kids open up with us, and ultimately saw them grow as players and people both on and off the court. Through encouraging communication with the campers, we also learned how to guide the kids through processing their emotions and more effectively work through conflicts. Further, we gained experience in leveling our communication with everyone we worked with, regardless of differences in age or experience. Bringing this experience to our careers as physicians, we look forward to continuing to understand others and center our interactions around building lasting relationships with both our patients and our communities.