



## Literacy and Math Initiatives Strengthen ASEP's Academic Focus

*Kaytie Dowcett, Academic Coordinator*

Tenacity's **After-School Excellence Program (ASEP)** becomes stronger, more focused, and more successful each session it is held. Spring session 2004 was no exception. We have raised the bar in academics, setting ever higher standards for the future of ASEP and our students.

In addition to five hours a week of tennis programming, during which students participate in a **Games-Based Approach** to learning the sport, Tenacity has made great strides in strengthening the academic program. With more rigorous recruiting and training of our volunteers, tutor-student relationships have reached new heights. More than half of ASEP students work one-on-one with a tutor and remain with the same tutor throughout the session. The strength of these relationships is exemplified by the case of one student, who risked dropping out of the program when she moved in the middle of April. Her volunteer tutor offered to drive her home, pick her up, and bring her to the program, ensuring that they could continue working together and sending a message to the student that their work was important.

These tutor-student relationships are, in large part, what make our academic program successful. In addition to working on homework together, tutors at the Reggie Lewis Center are now being trained to implement our pilot math curriculum, **Math Partners**. Designed by the Education Development Center to complement school-day lessons, Math Partners is well aligned with national math curriculum standards. The activities are fun, games-based, intellectually engaging, and they're designed for groups of 2-3 students and one tutor, which fits our program perfectly. We are just getting underway with this curriculum at the Reggie Lewis Center, and we're planning to implement it at all of our sites next fall.

In January of 2004, we began our new **Literacy Program** at the Boston Athletic Club. As grant recipients of *Boston's After-School for All* Literacy Coaching Initiative, we had the opportunity to work closely with ReadBoston this spring to develop and implement a program that changed students' attitudes about reading, while further developing their literacy skills. Students wrote daily in their journals, played literacy games before homework on Tuesdays, and spent Friday afternoons in reading groups. Over the course of 12 weeks, students read a combined total of 215 chapters from 10 novels, and 40 books read aloud. In January, students were asked if they liked to read, and 19 percent said no. When the same question was asked in May, only 5 percent



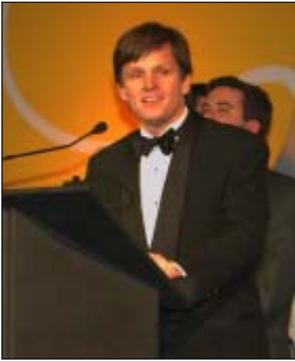
*ReadBoston coach Sarah Farbo and Danny Bellevue participate in the Tenacity Literacy Initiative at the Boston Athletic Club*

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## A Message from Ned Eames



As the 2003-2004 school year draws to a close and we prepare for Tenacity's sixth year of providing summer tennis and reading to Boston's youth, we want to thank all of you who have supported our efforts. Since early Fall, 100 students from the Taft, Edison, Lewis, McCormack, Gavin, and Renaissance middle schools have participated in our intensive **After-School Excellence Program (ASEP)** delivered at Harvard University, the Reggie Lewis Track & Athletic Center (RLC), and the Boston Athletic Club.

During the course of the school year, ASEP staff has worked diligently to further intensify our academic component by piloting new literacy and math curricula. This coming fall, all ASEP students will not only receive personal tutoring on their homework, they will also take part in our math and literacy offerings. As part of our comprehensive outcomes measurement system, students will take tests in literacy and math at the beginning and end of the academic year in order to determine what level of improvement has occurred. In addition, our ASEP tennis coordinators plan to unveil an enhanced approach to imparting valuable health and fitness knowledge to our students beyond their current tennis regimen.

In partnership with USA Tennis New England and the Boston Public Schools, Tenacity has introduced 500 *elementary school students* to tennis in physical education classes this spring. These students have been invited to participate in this year's **Summer Tennis & Reading Program**, where they will have a great experience and become eligible to try out for ASEP. In addition, 35 high school students, many of whom were ASEP and summer program participants, competed on a citywide *high school* tennis team launched by the Boston Public Schools and Tenacity. To help celebrate these student activities, we hosted our fifth annual extravaganza at the RLC for over 700 festive and spirited attendees.

In order to help meet the need to reach underserved children and stay on track with **Rallying to Serve**, our 5-year capacity building plan, we expect 2,730 kids at 20 neighborhood sites to participate in the Summer Tennis & Reading Program, delivered in partnership with Boston Centers for Youth & Families and with generous support from New Balance. This coming fall, we plan to expand ASEP to 120 students representing 8 partner middle schools. The Tenacity Board and Energy Team greatly appreciate your support and encourage you to stay with us as we build, in partnership with the City of Boston, a **Pathway to Excellence** from elementary to high school that will serve 5,000 Boston children per year by the 2008/2009 school year.

### Tenacity Notes

Special thanks from Tenacity to past ten-time Grand Slam Tennis Champion and Boston Athletic Club teaching pro **Anne Smith** for her efforts on behalf of Tenacity's kids.

We would like to thank **DiPesa & Company** for its outstanding donation of time and energy. We would like to thank **Quinn Printing** and **Lane, Berry & Co. International** for their exceptional contributions during 2003-2004. Tenacity also thanks **CIBC's Miracle Day** for this year's generous contribution.

Special thanks to **Bud Schultz** and **Elaine Cosseboom** for hosting a Tenacity fundraiser at the Cohasset Tennis & Squash Club in February. Over \$18,000 was raised to support our programs!

A big thank you to **Steve Abbott** for his skill, persistence, and generosity in serving as Event Coordinator for this year's Annual Extravaganza! We would also like to acknowledge **Gourmet Catering** for its assistance throughout our 5th Annual Extravaganza.

We are pleased to announce the addition of **Lawrence D. Greenberg** as a member of Tenacity's Board of Directors and Energy Team.

Tenacity would like to welcome **Beth Emery** and **Anna Mickelsen** to the staff! Beth comes to us from Boston Lyric Opera, and will be Tenacity's Development Manager. Anna takes over from **Marisa Coleman** as Tenacity's Office Manager. Marisa has moved on from Tenacity to pursue her formal education, and we wish her well.

## Tenacity's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Extravaganza a Smashing Success

Steve Abbott, Event Coordinator

Tenacity is all about helping Boston youth, and on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Extravaganza was a testament to what can be accomplished when a community of supporters gets behind a worthy cause and rallies to serve. Over 700 friends supported the benefit event at the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center in Roxbury. Many newcomers were impressed by the professionalism of this relatively young non-profit organization, which succeeded in netting ten percent of its \$1.2M annual operating budget.

Students from the After School Excellence and Summer Tennis and Reading Programs put on a tennis exhibition, informed guests about the 85 auction items available and, best of all, shared what Tenacity means to them. Emcee Robin Hamilton of CBS4, a Tenacity parent, and a teacher from the Gavin middle school each spoke about the critically important and positive influence provided by Tenacity.



Bill Drake from The Country Club, 3<sup>rd</sup> from left, Anne Smith of the BAC, 5<sup>th</sup> from left, and Tenacity students, staff, and contributors at the Annual Extravaganza

Event co-chairs Jennifer Stone Lesnick and Deedie Bouscaren listened carefully to prior-year attendee feedback in an effort to ensure the evening would be a great success – and it was. The dining room was elegant and dinner service provided by **Gourmet Catering** was superb. Over fifty volunteer Auction, Corporate, and Ticket Sales team members worked hard under the leadership of Kappy Freund, Chris Haughey, Judith Cantlin Ho, and Steve Abbott to secure auction items, corporate sponsors, and strong attendance. Twenty hospitality volunteers ensured that the event went smoothly.

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### U.S. Open President's Box Raffle!

Contact Tenacity at **617-562-0900 x3** to purchase raffle tickets for two seats to the President's Box at the U.S. Open. Tickets are available for just \$5.00 each, and proceeds will benefit Tenacity.

The second place finisher will receive two tickets to the August Pilot Pen Women's Tennis Tournament in New Haven, and third place finishers will win two tickets to the Campbell's Hall of Fame championship in Newport in July.

## 2004 Competitive Year For ASEP

Josh Katzman, Tennis Coordinator



Tenacity Team and Staff with juniors and staff from the Westboro Tennis and Swim Club

This spring, Tenacity students from all three ASEP sites—the Boston Athletic Club, Harvard University and the Reggie Lewis Center—played in organized matches against each other. For many, it was their first taste of competitive tennis, and it turned out to be addictive.

Regular matches were held throughout the spring, with students from one site traveling to another to take on the “home team.” Each match consisted of singles and doubles play and all participants built confidence as they became more experienced. Tentative first points quickly became enthusiastic rallies. Students who in January could barely serve from the baseline found themselves serving to win matches in a tiebreaker.

The season started with two strong squads from Harvard visiting the BAC and posting some impressive wins. A resilient BAC squad then traveled to Harvard and got their first team win on the road. The Reggie Lewis Center team got into the matches later, and was very competitive, being led by ASEP and Summer Program veterans.

In addition to encouraging significant improvements in their tennis ability, these matches also forced students to focus more on their academics: only students who had written down their assignments daily and brought all necessary materials to the study hall were allowed to play.

Some of ASEP's best tennis players also competed against the Latin Academy High School team in a scrimmage over April vacation. It was a great match with some terrific play on both sides, and a number of ASEP students came up with some big wins. These students also traveled to Westboro for an exciting match against juniors from the Westboro Tennis and Swim Club (where Ned Eames hit his first tennis balls in the 1970s), who also happened to be some of the top juniors in New England! There were amazing matches and points, and the Tenacity students left fired up for more competition.

It was a busy spring session for ASEP student teams, but they all did well and played hard in the matches. Good job everyone, and keep it up this summer!

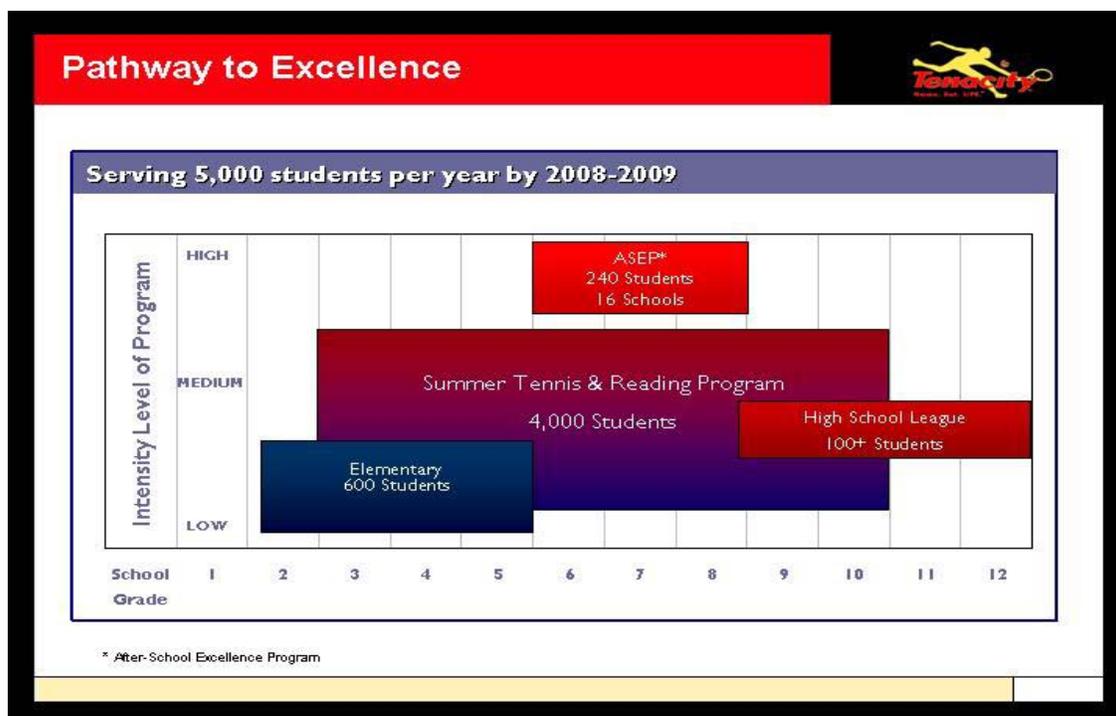
## Building the Pathway to Excellence

*Tyler Post, Tennis Coordinator*

Tenacity's Pathway to Excellence capacity-building plan continues to advance in both quality and scale through expansion of its complementary offerings.

In an effort to identify great first-year students for the upcoming fall session of the After-School Excellence Program, Tenacity introduced 500 fourth and fifth grade students in Boston to tennis this winter and spring by visiting physical education classes and teaching an exciting brand of tennis. Not only were the vast majority of children enthusiastic about the sport, they were also eagerly awaiting the start of our summer program, which will give them the opportunity to sharpen their developing racquet skills and become eligible for participation in the intensive After-School Excellence Program.

Tenacity also supported the development of high school tennis in Boston as a way to further encourage our recent ASEP middle school graduates. We did this by recruiting alumni now attending eight different public high schools in the city. Tenacity scheduled all matches for the boys' and girls' varsity teams and provided pre-season practices. By working to implement these elementary and high school initiatives, Tenacity is creating and enhancing the Pathway to Excellence.



## Growth in Tenacity's Future

*Andy Crane, Program Director*

Heading into its sixth year of programming, Tenacity has plans to be bigger than ever! Starting in July, our Summer Tennis and Reading Program will serve over 2,700 kids at more than 20 sites throughout Boston. In the fall, Tenacity will be expanding from 90 to 120 middle school students in our After-School Excellence Program.

Much has changed since our first summer in 1999, when we served 1,000 kids at 12 sites. Aside from the growth of the program, the two biggest developments are summer reading, which takes place in two half-hour sessions each day at all sites, and the development of Team Tennis, which now involves over 20 teams throughout the city. Created in partnership with **ReadBoston**, Tenacity's reading program was hugely successful in 2003. Kids took a break from tennis and read individually or in groups, thereby maintaining their reading skills over the course of the summer.

Team Tennis has been equally successful, and promises to be a central part of this summer's activities. A change for this year is that the Mayor's Cup tennis tournament has been moved up to coincide with the final week of the Tenacity program (August 16-20), so that more players, both in the team and individual events, will have the opportunity to participate.

As we look forward to getting the Summer program underway and expanding ASEP for the upcoming academic year, we hope that we'll be growing even more in the years to come.



*Tenacity student Trung Pham*

**At the Annual Extravaganza, Tenacity students took a few moments to express their feelings about the program and the experiences they have had over the past few years that have changed the way they look at the world.**



*"I graduated from Tenacity last spring and now play on the girls' tennis team at Latin Academy. I've had many opportunities to represent Tenacity, but the best of them all was a year ago when I was a ball girl for the Fed Cup team and introduced Billie Jean King to over 900 kids and adults right here at the Reggie Lewis Center."*

*-Chanice Darlington*



*"I'm an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at the Taft Middle School, and I'm in my final year of the After-School Program. Because of Tenacity, I work as a scorekeeper at the Harvard's Men's and Women's tennis matches, and this summer I'll be working for Tenacity teaching younger kids how to play. I'm ready to move on to high school and can't wait to play high school tennis. Thank you, Tenacity."*

*-Marcus John*



*"I live in South Boston. I graduated from the Tenacity ASEP Program last year, but I'm still involved. I help out two times a week at the Boston Athletic Club with Tenacity's Reading Program. You see, I love to read, and I'm passing that on to the younger Tenacity kids who are in the program today."*

*-Okha Ramos*



*"I live in Mission Hill and attend high school at TechBoston Academy in Dorchester. My biggest Tenacity moment came when I was interviewed on the television program Urban Update. I talked about my experience participating in a Words for the World exhibit at the Mary Baker Eddy Library here in Boston. It was all about adults learning from kids, just like you're doing now."*

*-Yves Singletary*

said no. These numbers only hint at the remarkable progress and changes in attitude we witnessed as the program moved forward.

When we announced to the students that we would be doing reading groups on Fridays, some were excited but many groaned and complained. The first week was difficult; some students sat reluctantly with a tutor and listened, while some were downright disruptive, making it difficult for those who wanted to read. We rearranged some of the groups, set some students up to read one-on-one with a tutor, and maintained our own enthusiasm and positive attitudes. Changes came more quickly than we expected. By the second week, we had several completely engaged groups reading from a wide variety of short stories, novels, biographies, and picture books. Each day, tutors would fill out reports on how their groups went, and they were almost always encouraging:



*Shanae Jones and Tenacity graduate volunteer Okha Ramos*

*“Greg did an AWESOME job during our book group. Not only did he listen very well, but he also read aloud extremely well. He said my voice inspired him!”*

*“Luis did a FANTASTIC job reading today! It was the first time he felt comfortable reading out loud.”*

*“I saw kids engaged, wanting to read, excited about getting to a certain part of the book. I think they gained more confidence when their peers respectfully listened to them. I also think they were more focused and interested.”*

As a glowing testament to the success of our Literacy Program, two groups of readers continued meeting with their tutors on Fridays even after the program session officially ended. They read about Arthur Ashe and worked on an essay to submit to the USTA’s **Arthur Ashe Essay Contest**. Winners will receive a trip to New York City.

As we look ahead to next fall’s ASEP program, we are excited and optimistic. We hope to build on the successes of this year’s new math and reading initiatives, and make these opportunities available to each of the 120 students we plan to serve next year.

## **Parent Tennis Initiative Brings New Level of Program Participation**

*Tyler Post, Tennis Coordinator*

In the fall of 2002, Tenacity began offering free tennis lessons for the parents of students from Tenacity’s After-School Excellence Program. The initiative was begun with the aim of enhancing family support for each ASEP student’s participation in our multi-year\* after-school program. For three or more Sundays per 10-week ASEP session, parent tennis lessons run concurrently with standard ASEP student tennis activities.

What began twenty months ago as an experimental offering has since exploded with parental enthusiasm for the sport. Attendance at parent tennis lessons has risen and Tenacity is thrilled to see that many parents eagerly await their six glorious “Parent Tennis Sundays” per year. Some parents are even lobbying for expansion: “I love parent tennis” exclaims the mother of an eighth grade boy enrolled in the ASEP program at Harvard. “I wish I could come out to the courts with my son every Sunday.” This level of parental involvement serves to improve the retention rate for our ASEP students.

*\*Each ASEP student agrees to participate in two intensive ten-week sessions during each of his or her three middle school academic years.*

## *Annual Extravaganza, continued from page Three*

Silent auction items included tickets to Red Sox/Yankees games, a Walt Disney World Getaway, and a variety of tennis, dining, A&E, TLC, and sports related items. The live auction, led by Dr. Charlie Tracy, included trips to Wimbledon, the US Open, Pinehurst, Westin Rio Mar Resort in Puerto Rico, a weekend in Vermont with New England tennis legend Ted Hoehn, and a Captiva Island condo. Nearly \$15,000 was raised for Summer Tennis and Reading Program Scholarships.

Tenacity would like to extend heartfelt thanks to those individuals and vendors who helped with the event, title sponsor **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts**, all those who provided auction items, as well as those who attended, organized a table of friends, sponsored a corporate table, advertised in the Program Book, or made a contribution. Your support enables Tenacity to continue improving the scholastic, character, and physical development of Boston’s youth.



*Michael Horwitz, Kasey Kaufman, Ned Eames, and Robin Hamilton*

## Going The Extra Mile Brings Life Skills To New Heights

Josh Katzman, Tennis Coordinator

This spring, a number of Tenacity students had a chance to extend their hard work and dedication beyond typical after-school sessions. They got out into the local community and experienced a side of New England much different than the streets of Boston.

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, for the second year in a row, a number of Tenacity students participated in Project Bread's **Walk For Hunger** – a 20 mile walk through the greater Boston area that raises money for families throughout Massachusetts. The students were nervous about the distance when they started, but they all did their best and we were proud of them, not only for their effort the day of the walk, but for their desire to support people in their community.



Tenacity students have participated in the Walk for Hunger for the past two years

Later in May, twelve current Tenacity students participated in an incredible learning experience: the **1<sup>st</sup> Annual Tenacity Camping Trip**. After receiving some very generous donations at our April 3<sup>rd</sup> Gala Event, students spent two nights in New Hampshire's White Mountains as part of the Appalachian Mountain Club's *A Mountain Classroom* program. The group spent the first night at the new Highland Center in Crawford Notch. The next morning, campers and staffers woke up, geared up, and started hiking to the AMC's Mizpah Hut, a wilderness lodging on Mt. Pierce. The weekend was full of team-building and leadership activities, as well as instruction about ecology and the environment. Thanks again to all the people who supported this effort and made this once in a lifetime trip possible.



Tenacity students and staff take in a Sox game from the Dunkin' Dugout

Thanks to the generosity of Dunkin' Donuts and the Boston Red Sox, Tenacity students had the opportunity to watch two baseball games from Fenway Park's **Dunkin' Dugout**. Students are looking forward to attending an additional game in June.

It has been a very busy and memorable spring for our students, and we were all excited to see them getting out into the community and into nature. The support they have received has been great and they are looking forward to more opportunities for fun trips as well as chances to give back.

## Scorekeeping Keeps Kids on Track

Tyler Post, Tennis Coordinator



Ken Liang keeps score at a Harvard tennis match

**H**arvard Tennis Scorekeeper. This prestigious title was bestowed upon eight of Tenacity's current ASEP students and four recent graduates between January and April of 2004.

For all Harvard home varsity men's and women's tennis matches, one scorekeeper is allocated per court. They must tabulate the score for the duration of their assigned match, point by point, to be displayed on the electronic spectator scoreboard.

"I like playing a part in Scorekeeping because it keeps me involved with Tenacity even though I graduated from the program last year," says Renaud Alexandre, an honor roll student who plays first doubles for the Boston Latin Academy boy's varsity squad.

Not only does Scorekeeping keep our ASEP grads active in the Tenacity community, it puts them in a leadership role where they thrive as positive role models for the younger 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade scorekeepers.

Richard Wilson is a 10<sup>th</sup> grade scorekeeping veteran. A star ASEP graduate, honor roll student at East Boston High school, and Tenacity summer staff employee, Richard is vocal about how much scorekeeping has given him. "Scorekeeping is like a job to me. I get paid for the work, and this has helped me learn how to be responsible with money. It has also given me the chance to build a relationship with both the men's and the women's Harvard tennis teams." He also appreciates the opportunity to simply be a part of a positive community. "Now that I do scorekeeping for the Harvard teams, I get out of my house a lot more."

### On the Horizon

#### Summer Tennis & Reading Program

July 6-Aug 20

Tenacity Tournament: July 31

Mayors Cup: August 16-19



# Newsletter

Spring 2004



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