



## Changing Students' Lives, One Page at a Time

*Kaytie Dowcett, Assistant Program Director*

When students first learn about Tenacity, they are often surprised that we have a literacy component and they ask “Why do we have to read?” My initial response is to encourage them to rephrase the question and ask “Why do we *get* to read?” While these two questions are identical but for a single word, they reflect the gap between where our students are when they join Tenacity and where we’d like to take them. Preferably, we’d like to transform the perception of reading and writing as burdensome and boring to something enjoyable and meaningful, and do so while building real skills. After only a year of our new literacy program, we know we’re making significant progress toward this goal.

In the first years of Tenacity’s **After-School Excellence Program** (ASEP), the major focus in our study halls was on homework help. Providing one-on-one tutoring to our students seemed the best way to positively impact their academic and school success. We noticed, however, that a frequent impediment to the successful completion of homework was the fact that many students were struggling with a lack of strong foundational skills in reading, writing, and oral communication. Furthermore, we are aware that for the past decade, the city of Boston has made literacy a priority in every school across the city—and we want to support that effort. In my mind, though, the most compelling reason that students *get* to read during ASEP is that reading has the power to change lives, and changing lives is what Tenacity is all about.

With all this in mind, we set out last summer to create a literacy program, which we launched in the fall of 2004. With support from the **Harvard After-School Initiative** and **Boston’s After-School For All Partnership**, we continued to work closely with our literacy coach from **ReadBoston**, and we consulted with curriculum developers at the **Developmental Studies Center** (DSC) in Oakland, CA. We were excited to learn that these groups shared our belief in the power of reading to make a profound impact on young people. Using DSC’s *KidzLit* curriculum as a jumping-off point, we have created a literacy curriculum that parallels our Life Skills curriculum, with the shared goal of fostering in students a strong, positive self-concept.

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*ASEP students at the Reggie Lewis Center demonstrate their creativity*

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## A Message from Ned Eames



*Hockey? Baseball? Tennis?*

This coming August will signal the conclusion of an action packed second year of Rallying to Serve, our five year capacity building plan to offer quality programming to 5,000 Boston children per year by 2009. We are thrilled both to be serving 3,000 students in 2005 and that we are on track to fulfill our five year goal. While we are well on our way to achieving citywide scale in both the summer and school-year, Tenacity is driven to continuously improve our youth offerings and make an increasingly positive impact in the lives of our students.

### After School

This past school year, our intensive **After-School Excellence Program** (ASEP), designed for at risk 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, grew from 90 to 120 children. This expansion was accomplished by creating formal relationships with the New Boston Pilot and Curley Middle Schools, who joined the Gavin, McCormack, Edison, and Lewis Middle Schools as ASEP partners. In parallel with this expansion, our staff designed and launched a customized literacy curriculum, created an Alumni Club, set ambitious retention goals, implemented a high school selection service for each 8<sup>th</sup> grader, refined our life skills curriculum, and updated our Balanced Scorecard to include annual pre and post literacy, life-skills, and fitness tests for every ASEP student. (Please see page 5 for more details on our measurement effort.)

While we strive to help each student improve her/his academic, life-skills, and on-court performance each year, our overarching aim is to fully prepare our ASEP students to succeed in and graduate from high school and go on to college. We are encouraged by the fact that, to date, not one ASEP graduate has dropped out of high school. As part of our capacity building plan, we hope to provide 30 additional students the opportunity to benefit from ASEP by adding one or two additional partner middle schools this coming fall as we expand to serve 150 students. In an effort to recruit new students into next fall's ASEP, we provided tennis instruction to 350 fifth graders this past spring. Many of these recent elementary school graduates will participate in this summer's program, where they will become eligible for selection to the fall ASEP program. In order to better serve our ASEP graduates, we worked with the Boston Public Schools to deliver the beginning phase of what we hope will become a full fledged High School Tennis League in Boston.

### This Summer

In partnership with Mayor Menino, **Boston Centers for Youth & Families**, and the **Boston Parks Department**, we will expand from 2,791 to 3,000+ Boston children served in this year's **Summer Tennis & Reading Program**. We are particularly enthusiastic about new partnerships that will enable us to serve children from East Boston, Lower Roxbury/South End, and Dorchester. In partnership with the city, we will operate a total of 24 neighborhood based sites, direct the Mayor's Cup tournament, and organize a 25-team neighborhood based youth tennis league. We are very excited about the fact that the Boston Lobsters and World Team Tennis are coming back to Boston this summer! We look forward to offering our students the opportunity to experience this competitive, fun, and family oriented version of professional tennis and encourage each of you to attend the matches (see Lobsters article on page 9).

Having demonstrated that our summer students enjoy having the opportunity to take a break from the courts to read each day, and that we can execute literacy enhancement on a citywide scale, we are increasing our investment in summer reading. Not only will all tennis staff be professionally trained to supervise daily reading sessions, but we will also deploy eight professional reading experts for the summer who, along with our four year-round academic coordinators, will each oversee the reading activity at two Tenacity sites located in close proximity to each other.

### Keys to Building Capacity

As Tenacity builds capacity to annually serve 1,000 students in the school year and 4,000 in the summer by 2009, our annual operating budget will increase from \$1M to \$2M per year. We are taking appropriate steps to enhance our ability to attract financial contributions from individual donors, foundations, corporations, government, and our own special events. One key component of our development effort is the Annual Extravaganza that many of you have supported at the Reggie Lewis Track & Athletic Center each spring. With the help of Harvard's Women's and Men's Tennis Teams, Bud Collins, Ron Druker of the Colonnade Hotel, Joe Patrnczak of Blue Cross Blue Shield, New Balance, Wilson, John Quinn of Quinn Printing, and several past tennis stars including Todd Martin, Rosie Casals, Katrina Adams, Tim Mayotte, Mel Purcell, Tim Wilkison, Martin Blackman, Richey Reneberg, and other special guests, we took a major step towards the unveiling of a greatly enhanced 2006 Extravaganza. On April 30, 2005, each of these leaders participated in a Celebrity Pro Am designed to build greater support for our youth programs amongst both the ranks of professional tennis players and local corporations. We eagerly anticipate integrating these new professional tennis and corporate friends into a weekend-long Extravaganza in 2006 that will include, among other festivities, a public professional tennis exhibition.

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### **A Special Thanks**

A sincere thanks to each of you who support Tenacity financially and every dedicated staff member and program volunteer who made the commitment to help us both serve more students and further improve our life-skills, literacy, and tennis offerings. We especially appreciate the generous support of The **Boston Athletic Club**, **Harvard University**, and the **Reggie Lewis Track & Athletic Center**, our generous indoor facility partners who make ASEP a possibility by providing classroom space and tennis courts during the school year. We look forward to continuing our work with each of you on behalf of Boston's children and keeping you up to date as we grow to serve 5,000 Boston children per year by 2009.

*Red James*

## **Tenacity "Swings" with the Pros!**

*Jeff Juell, Development Coordinator*

Spring was a successful season again this year for Tenacity. In place of our annual Extravaganza, we hosted two smaller events, which enabled us to begin planning for a supercharged Extravaganza next spring! The first event, the 2005 **You Get-a-Bye Ball**, was a "virtual event" that featured a raffle prize drawing. Our second event, the 2005 **Celebrity Tennis Pro Am & Clinic**, focused on building a foundation of corporate sponsorship and pro tennis involvement that will enable us to take the Extravaganza to a whole new level in Spring 2006.

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Tenacity, featuring a jovial **Bud Collins**, hosted thirteen past touring professionals in a day of tennis and camaraderie with local business leaders and Tenacity students. The roster of accomplished tennis stars included:

- Rosie Casals, 17 WTA Titles, Singles #3, Doubles #1
- Todd Martin, 8 ATP Titles, Singles #4
- Tim Mayotte, 12 ATP Titles, Singles #7
- Richey Reneberg, 19 ATP Titles, Doubles #1
- Katrina Adams, 21 WTA Titles, Doubles #8
- Ferdi Taygan, 1982 French Open Doubles Champ, Doubles #9
- Mel Purcell, 3 ATP Titles, Singles #21
- Tim Wilkison, Singles #23
- Bob Green, Singles #39
- Bud Schultz, Singles #40
- Erika deLone, Singles #65
- Martin Blackman, Singles #158
- Tim Donovan, Singles #346

The Pro Am & Clinic had many highlight-reel moments. After 80 minutes of tennis drills and games, it was invigorating to see ASEP 8<sup>th</sup> grader Bashiru Akinfolarin streak over the line, beating pro Tim Wilkison in a fitness sprint. The practice with the pros gave more than forty Tenacity students and members of the Harvard Varsity men's and women's tennis teams a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to hit with some of the most successful professional players of the last twenty-five years. The Pro Am competition elevated our guests' games and spirits, while the commentary of Bud Collins resulted in smiles in the audience as well as on the court.

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# Tenacity Heats Up this Summer

Andy Crane, Program Director

Tenacity's **Summer Tennis & Reading Program**, heading into its eighth year, is bound to be its biggest ever! We've added new sites and will be taking our reading program to new heights. We'll be serving more kids, including kids with disabilities, and we'll be partnering with more organizations, including many in neighborhoods served by our biggest partner, the **Boston Centers for Youth and Families (BCYF)**.

We expect to have a staff of over 100 high school students, college students, and adults teaching tennis and reading to **3,000** Boston kids. We'll be giving lessons in virtually every neighborhood in the city, including new sites at the Harborside Community Center in East Boston, Ramsay Park in the South End, and the Grove Hall Community Center in Dorchester.

We'll also have reading coordinators at all our sites to ensure that all the kids attending the program will have a meaningful and enjoyable reading experience. Our entire staff will be trained to participate in reading activities, and the staff will also be trained to serve kids with all types of disabilities. A special thanks to our summer training partners, **ReadBoston, BCYF, The Center for Study of Sport in Society** at Northeastern University, and the **United States Tennis Association**. Our staff will be well equipped and looking sharp thanks to BCYF, **Good Sports, Wilson Sporting Goods, New Balance, and City Sports**.

Our team tennis program should be our biggest ever, with more than 20 teams competing for the Mayor's Cup trophy. We expect that close to 300 kids will compete in the singles and doubles part of the Mayor's Cup. Yes, the numbers are daunting, but we're ready to go. Let the games begin!

## On the Horizon

**July 5 - August 19**

Summer Tennis & Reading Program (Register now by calling 617-562-0900 x3 or online at [www.tenacity.org](http://www.tenacity.org))

The week of August 15, Tenacity will sponsor the Annual **Mayor's Cup** competition, an opportunity for kids of all ages in the city of Boston to show off their tennis skills!

# Head For The Hills!

Josh Katzman, Assistant Program Director

It was a gray morning in March when 18 students from Tenacity's South Boston site drove north to Pinkham Notch, in the heart of New Hampshire's White Mountains. Fortunately the weather cleared and by the time everyone arrived, they were excited for a weekend full of hiking, intellectual debate, and lots of good ol' fun. This second annual Tenacity camping trip, organized with the assistance of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), was very different than the first, primarily because of the huge amount of snow that covered the ground!



Shanae Jones, Ivy Tutt, Jessica Giraldo, Maria Gomez, Tiffany Crespo, Kaytie Dowcett, and Erika Leger in their quinzhee

Students were divided into three teams for the weekend, and had to conduct a scavenger hunt that got them exploring their new environment and meeting other people who were also enjoying the trails as the kids searched for people and items. Teams also took great pride in working together, whether it was building enormous quinzhees (a type of snow shelter), literally pulling each other up steep sections of the trail in snowshoes, or developing presentations to discuss the merits of a large shopping center being developed for a small town.

As the weekend wound down, and the students looked forward to returning to their families, two favorite questions were: "Can we stay?" and "When can we come back?"



Students get used to their snow shoes at the foot of Mt. Washington

After a weekend of new experiences and pushing their limits, students found they had a lot of new skills, from snow shoeing, to creative sandwich making, to public speaking, to listening to teammates to reach a specific goal. They also gained a strong sense of self-confidence and accomplishment. We would like to congratulate all the students that participated and thank them for a great weekend.

Tenacity would also like to extend its sincerest thanks to **Bonnie and Ken Hargreaves of Amherst**, whose generosity made this trip possible. Paul and Mary Collins, Jessica Giaraldo, and the entire AMC staff deserve a lot of thanks as well for their long days (and nights) and incredible enthusiasm and support on the trails.



Students enjoying the view from Square Ledge after a difficult hike

# ASEP Measures Up: Literacy Scores Rise

Lissa Dutra, *Balanced Score Card Associate*

The main goal of Tenacity's **After-School Excellence Program (ASEP)** is to foster "Excellence," of course! At Tenacity, we've defined "excellence" as success in three important areas: 1) literacy/reading skills, 2) behavior/life skills, and 3) tennis/physical fitness. Since 2002, Tenacity has been working on developing ways to measure student progress in these areas to ensure that both the ASEP program and our students are "measuring up" to the excellence we hope and expect to achieve. In fall of 2004, we launched a comprehensive evaluation program with the goal of measuring our progress in each of these areas. Preliminary data collected from this evaluation indicates very exciting results!

## Literacy/Reading Skills

In terms of academic success, our main goal is to improve our students' literacy and reading skills through the use of a specialized reading program. To measure success in this area, ASEP students complete a literacy test at the beginning and end of the academic year. This test measures different types of literacy and reading skills so we can determine in what areas each student excels, versus in what areas she or he needs additional support. Initial results from our first year of testing are very promising, demonstrating that ASEP students have experienced significant improvement in their literacy skills over the course of the academic year. These results further indicate that students are particularly excelling in reading and listening comprehension, which may be considered the foundation of literacy excellence.

In addition, since most Boston Public School students take a number of standardized reading tests throughout the year in school, we also plan to compare our student's scores on these tests to those of other students in Boston Public Schools, so that we can analyze ASEP students' progress in literacy/reading skills versus their peers. We are currently in the process of gathering and analyzing data from these standardized tests.

## Behavior/Life Skills

Another main goal of ASEP is to foster our students' social and emotional development. We have chosen a number of important categories of life skills to focus on in ASEP. We encourage students to think deeply about five core concepts: respect, awareness, honesty, responsibility, and motivation. Activities such as readings, journal responses, group activities, and "Quotes of the Week" give students a way to explore how these concepts can be applied to different areas of their lives. Over time, these internal concepts become more concrete and observable in students' development through: self-control, teamwork, conflict resolution, organization, communication, and hard work. We believe that by fostering these values and skills, each student will develop a positive sense of self, as well as experience more success and enjoyment in life.

To measure progress in these life skills, ASEP students complete forms that describe their skills in each of these areas at the beginning and end of each academic year. As with the literacy/reading test, these forms help us determine what life skill areas each

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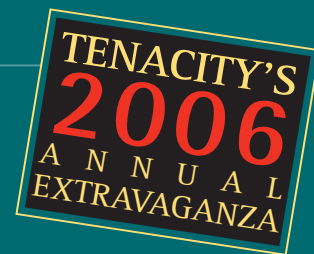
## CELEBRITY PRO TENNIS!

### TENACITY STUDENTS!

### An even more Electrifying Extravaganza!

In the Spring of 2006, our 7th Annual Extravaganza will captivate you with the excitement of celebrity pro tennis! In its triumphant return, the Extravaganza promises to elevate the annual Tenacity shindig to an entirely new level. The 7th Annual Extravaganza will be an unforgettable occasion, featuring a star studded professional tennis exhibition, student testimonials, and much more!

SATURDAY APRIL 29, 2006



Each of the pieces of literature we read with our young people has a corresponding Tenacity Literacy Guide that encourages students to think, talk, and write about the identity of the characters, the choices they make, and the ways in which they interact with different people in their lives. We then have students take time to reflect on their own lives and the choices they make each day. Throughout the course of the year, students are continually reading, writing, and thinking about ways to answer the questions: “Who am I deep down?” “How do others see me?” “How do my surroundings shape me?” and “How can I shape my surroundings?” We know from experience that making the reading relevant to students’ lives is a strong motivator and helps students feel *connected* to literature, not alienated from it.

Our literacy curriculum is implemented by trained tutors in very small groups of 2-3 students per tutor. Performing the reading in such small groups allows for the development of close relationships and the creation of an intimate environment in which students feel comfortable sharing with each other, asking questions, supporting each other, and taking positive risks. For example, when reading Sharon Flake’s *The Skin I’m In* last semester, one all-girls group got into some difficult conversations about their own friendships and the roles that race, skin color, and ethnicity sometimes play in those relationships. Through bold questioning and honest self-reflection, the girls were able to recognize prejudices within themselves that they didn’t even know existed. This level of sharing and reflecting is unlikely to have occurred in a large group setting.

It is clear that our literacy program is having a positive and lasting effect on our students; they repeatedly identify themselves with their books and their reading groups even outside of the program. On a recent trip to New Hampshire, when one group had to come up with a team name, they chose a name from one of the stories they had read in *An Island Like You*. After exploring some of the vocabulary in Rodman Philbrick’s *Freak the Mighty*, one boys’ group has managed to turn the word *mediocre* into vernacular among their peers. Many of the girls who read *The Skin I’m In* are now reading the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> books in Sharon Flake’s series and, while they are still wrestling with some of their own prejudices that have surfaced, they are working on being more open and understanding. What’s more, they’ve experienced firsthand the power reading can have in pushing our ideas about ourselves and the world to new levels.

## Tenacity Notes

We are proud to be the recipient of a grant from BostNet’s **LOYD Initiative**, which will enable us to further our service to youth with disabilities in the City of Boston this summer and into the next school year.

Tenacity’s **Bud Schultz** and **Ned Eames** were members of the victorious New England team that participated in the Atlantic Coast 45s Intersectional Competition, winning over teams from the Eastern, Middle, & Mid-Atlantic sections. Schultz won the pivotal match, clinching the win for the New England team.

We are pleased to announce the start of our search for a **School Year Program Director**.

Tenacity extends a warm welcome to former New England Patriot defensive end **Garin Veris**, who now serves as Director of Recreation for Boston Centers for Youth & Families.

Thanks to **Ted Hoehn** and **Windridge Tennis Camps** for once again offering to host four Tenacity students for fun and tennis instruction in Vermont this summer.

We would like to send out our sincere thanks to **John Nimick** of Event Engine for his efforts in staging our Celebrity Pro-Am & Clinic. Huge thanks also go to our host, Harvard University, and sponsors **Blue Cross & Blue Shield**, the **Colonnade Hotel**, **Fidelity Investments**, **New Balance**, and **Wilson Sporting Goods**, for making the event a smashing success.

Special thanks to **City Sports**, **Quinn Printing**, and the **Longwood Cricket Club** for their generous support over the past year.

We would like to welcome **Jeff Juell** on board as our new Development Coordinator. We also extend a warm welcome to new Academic Coordinator **Nicole Soucy** and Academic Liaison **Brian Tuttle**.

We would also like to thank **John** and **Cindy Chambliss** for hosting a fun tennis and dinner outing this spring.

# Student Leaders

## College Bound Leaders

Tenacity just received great news about Sherraine Rodney, Landon Gonsalves, and Lauren Maggio, members of our first graduating class in 2001. All three recently graduated from high school and are headed off to college. Sherraine graduated *cum laude* from Beaver Country Day and will be attending Bates College! Landon is headed to Umass Amherst, and Lauren will be attending Rochester Institute of Technology. Congratulations Sherraine, Landon, and Lauren!



*Members of the Tenacity Alumni Club at their first meeting in April at Harvard University*

## Alumni Club

Tenacity recently established an Alumni Club for the graduates of the **After-School Excellence Program**. The club provides a forum for grads to continue playing tennis, spend time with each other at Alumni events, and learn about new opportunities that Tenacity offers and recommends for high school students. Through Alumni activities, Tenacity staff and students can not only keep track of each other more easily, but, more importantly, they sustain friendships.

The Alumni Club Board, a volunteer governing committee established at the first Alumni Club meeting in April of 2005, consists of **Dan Gonzalez, Peter Ma, Roland Abichaker, Adrienne McGillicuddy, Richard Wilson, Renaud Alexandre, and Yves Singletary.**

## Leaders of Today: Where are they Going?

Tenacity provides its 8th grade ASEP students with a high school placement program that helps each child attend the ideal high school for their particular needs. Here is a list of the high schools our 8th graders will be attending in the 2005-2006 school year. We will miss them, but hope they will return to spend time with us in the Alumni Club and the Summer Tennis & Reading Program.

### Student

Bashiru Akinfolarin  
Chauniece Barton  
Danny Bellevue  
John Pat Coveney  
Maria Gomez  
Isamar Herrera  
Aden Hussein  
Shanae Jones  
Ennio Kote  
Erika Leger  
Patrick Lewis  
Carlos Lopes  
John Nguyen  
Peter Nguyen  
Luis Perez  
Cristian Rodriguez

### School

Beacon Academy  
TechBoston  
BC High  
Excel  
City on a Hill  
MATCH  
Medford religious school  
Beacon Academy  
MATCH  
Fenway High  
Governer Dummer Academy  
Beacon Academy  
TechBoston  
City on a Hill  
Snowden  
ACC



*Cristian Rodriguez, Andy Crane, Bashiru Akinfolarin, Carlos Lopes, and Josh Katzman*

## Leaders of the Future: New Partners

Tenacity is excited to announce the addition of two new Boston Public middle schools to our team this year. We are currently serving 19 students from the Mary E. Curley Middle School and 13 from the New Boston Pilot Middle School. Our first year with these partners has been a great success, and we thank Curley Principal Gerardo Martinez and New Boston Principal Debra Socia for their continued support.



### *Measurement, continued from page Five*

student is excelling in, and in what areas she or he might need additional support, as well as how ASEP students (as a whole) are excelling in these life skills. We are still in the process of analyzing the life skills data we have gathered over the past academic year and expect to be able to present these findings in the fall. Preliminary analyses, however, are demonstrating some interesting findings. One such finding is that ASEP students, especially girls, are becoming more conscious of their personal strengths and weaknesses, as well as becoming more aware of their behavior and its impact on others. Such awareness may help lay the groundwork for identity development and self-understanding.

### **Tennis/Physical Fitness**

In the area of tennis and physical fitness, we have enhanced our tennis program this year with a greater emphasis on health and fitness. Recognizing the importance of encouraging students to eat well, be physically active, and watch less television, we address these issues during ASEP's tennis sessions. To help measure progress in these areas, tennis instructors use tennis skill assessments to measure each student's knowledge of and performance in tennis. In addition, shuttle runs are used to measure students' level of physical fitness. Once again, these assessments will be carried out at the beginning and end of each academic year, with the goal of measuring each student's progress, as well as the overall progress of ASEP students in these areas. Data from these assessments have not yet been analyzed, but we expect to present tennis and physical fitness results in the fall.

### **Over the Long Run**

Since we are also invested in measuring the long-term impact of ASEP, this year we have created an Alumni Club to help keep track of our graduates' progress through high school and beyond. ASEP graduates who are members of the Alumni Club will be involved in many fun activities, as well as have the opportunity for mentoring by Tenacity staff in areas such as the college application process and preparation for the SATs. The Alumni Club will also allow us to gather information about which of our students successfully progress through and graduate from high school, as well as enter college. Our graduates' high school performances will then be compared to that of other students in the Boston Public School system to help us determine how our graduates "measure up" in comparison to their peers.

### **Where Does the Data Go?**

All the information that we gather is managed by an evaluation team at Tenacity. The information is organized in databases and at the beginning and end of each academic year, the team works together to understand our students' areas of success and weakness. This information helps us maintain and continue to strengthen our work in areas of success, as well as to improve our work in areas of weakness. Thus far, our evaluation efforts have enabled us to demonstrate how our students are excelling in various areas of their development and we expect these efforts to be another step towards helping our students achieve "excellence" in their daily lives.

### *Pros, continued from page Three*

Most importantly, the day at Harvard offered pros and participants alike a chance to see Tenacity at work. Tenacity standouts Shanae Jones and Richard Wilson spoke about their experiences in Tenacity's After-School Excellence Program (ASEP). Their speeches compellingly illustrated the results and potential long-term impact of this intensive, multiyear program that focuses on life-skills, literacy, and tennis.



*Bob Green, Tim Mayotte, Todd Martin, Tim Wilkison, Richey Reneberg, and Tenacity co-founder Bud Schultz*

With the new friendships we forged in the pro tennis world with this event, continuing support from Boston's own tennis legend Bud Collins, and a stronger emphasis on corporate sponsorship and professional-level tennis, we believe the annual spring Tenacity Extravaganza can grow exponentially in its scale and financial contribution to our youth offerings. We look forward to celebrating with you at Tenacity's 2006 Annual Extravaganza.



*Erika DeLone, Bud Collins, USA Tennis New England Hall of Famer Marjorie Morrill Whiting, Katrina Adams, and Rosie Casals*



# Tenacity Welcomes the Lobsters!

*Anna Mickelsen, Office Manager*

Professional tennis returns to Boston this year with the return of the Boston Lobsters, a World Team Tennis franchise. We are very excited to announce the designation of Tenacity as the Lobsters' official charity. In this capacity, we will be collaborating with Bahar Uttam, the Lobsters' Owner and Chief Executive Officer, and Peter Mandeau, the General Manager and Chief Operating Officer, to help reintroduce the excitement of professional tennis to the Boston area.



*Tennis legend  
Martina Navratilova*

World Team Tennis, a 31-year old twelve-team professional league originated by Billie Jean King and Larry King in the early 1970s, employs a unique format in which teams of two men and two women play five sets of tennis: men's singles, women's singles, men's doubles, women's doubles, and mixed doubles. The winning team is decided based on cumulative games won.

In the recent WTT draft, the Lobsters drafted tennis legend **Martina Navratilova** and Harvard All-Americans **James Blake** and **Thomas Blake**, as well as **Daja Bedanova**, **Kristen Schlukibir**, and 2005 Australian Open Mixed Doubles Champion **Scott Draper**. The Lobsters will be coached by past ten-time Grand Slam Tennis Champion and former number one world doubles player **Dr. Anne Smith**, an original Boston Lobsters member and long-time teaching pro at the Boston Athletic Club.

Boston was previously home to the Lobsters from 1974 to 1978. Navratilova, who played for the Lobsters in 1978, will face off against former world number one Martina Hingis to kick off WTT action this year in Boston. Former US Davis Cup Team Member and two-time Harvard All-American James Blake will team with brother Tom in doubles matches as well as taking on challenging singles competition.

The Lobsters will play seven home dates in Harvard's Bright Arena:

- July 5
- July 7
- July 10
- July 11
- July 14
- July 18
- July 21

Matches will be played in the evenings during the weekdays and during afternoons/evenings on the weekends. For more information, visit [www.bostonlobsters.net](http://www.bostonlobsters.net).

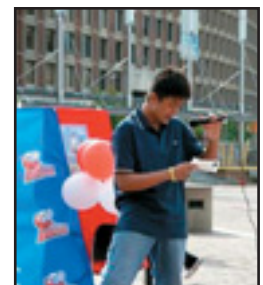


*James Blake*

## Tenacity Student wins "KidCaster" Honors

*Brian Tuttle, Academic Liaison*

Several Tenacity students recently took part in a local competition to find the perfect "KidCaster." This event took place on City Hall Plaza and was sponsored by the **Boston Lobsters**. The winner of the KidCaster challenge, Tenacity's own **John Nguyen**, won the opportunity to be on live television performing sideline interview duties at a Lobsters match in July. The Kidcaster Challenge also featured a group of Tenacity students who had the opportunity to play tennis with the great "Dual-Hand Luke," Luke Jensen, a former #1 doubles player in the world. On a sun shimmering day, with students showing off their tennis skills right on City Hall Plaza, the KidCaster event was a booming success for both Tenacity and the Boston Lobsters, New England's next great sports team.



*John Nguyen delivers a winning audition on City Hall Plaza*

# Girls (and Boys) Just Want to Have Fun

Sara Pollock, Academic Coordinator

Each Wednesday at the Reggie Lewis Track & Athletic Center this past session, we took a break from our regular study hall Literacy Groups and focused on making connections between our books and our own lives. Because the session's theme was Self in Relationships, we ran all boy and all girl sessions to create an even safer space for open and honest discussions. Our activities focused on five main questions: What are the different types of relationships I have? What do I bring to relationships? Do these relationships shape who I am? How can I be my best in relationships? How am I important and unique?

Students reflected on what relationships they have in their lives, and how these relationships affect their own identity. Early conversations built an atmosphere of support in which students have recently moved their focus to relationships within Tenacity. This has allowed us to teach lessons on effective communication and how our language has an impact on those around us.

Here's what some kids have to say about our new initiative:

On Wednesdays we have girls' group. We talk about our situations. We talk about problems in our life and things in the world. This is good because we know each others' thoughts. Girls go through the same stuff so we have our own situations. We can talk more openly without boys there. Girls have more issues and feelings to share than boys. After girls' group we feel good because we get things off our chests. We trust the girls in Tenacity to keep our conversations inside Tenacity. Girls rule! (Chenelle, 6<sup>th</sup> grade girl)

On Wednesdays during Tenacity we divide our group into two, dividing boys and girls from each other. We do this so the girls and the boys get a chance to understand each other. The boys talk about things girls do not understand. If a boy has a problem with relationship issues he might know a friend or someone at Tenacity who can help him out. (Omar, 7<sup>th</sup> grade boy)

This has been our first session working with boys and girls groups at the Reggie Lewis Center, and it's been a successful experiment! We look forward to expanding the program even more in the years to come.

# Measuring Life Skills

Anna Mickelsen, Office Manager

Tenacity provides programming that offers academic and tennis instruction and competition with a focus on the development of skills needed to succeed in every aspect of life. We are dedicated to creating a positive environment for character development and improving life skills for Boston's youth. During our first several years of existence, our academic and tennis programs grew so rapidly that life skills were taught informally through the general design of the program, which includes a multi-year interaction between kids, strong mentors, and program staff, as well as an emphasis on attendance, effort, and attitude.

Because of the crucial importance of life skills in student development, we recently reached a stage in the expansion of our programs when it was essential to identify the specific life skills we sought to convey and clarify our plan for communicating them to our students. Working collaboratively over the last six months, we have identified five core concepts for students to contemplate as they participate in the program: **respect, awareness, honesty, responsibility, and motivation**. Over time, students will transfer these internal concepts into more concrete life skills: **self-control, teamwork, conflict resolution, organization, communication, and hard work**.

Our Life Skills are posted in our study halls and on our tennis courts; students are evaluated on their progress in life skill categories, they participate in field trips throughout the year that help further develop one or more life skills, and every Tenacity activity touches on one or more life skill categories. At the start of each week, a quote that highlights a particular life skill is displayed and discussed among students and staff. After discussion of the quote's general meaning, program staff lead a dialogue with students about how the quote can be related to the students' performance and behavior. In the study hall, communication is the major focus, and life skills are explored through literature and group games. On the tennis court, group games and discussions foster the development of life skills through community, teamwork, and trust.

It is our hope that our emphasis on teaching life skills will enable students to become aware of feelings, thoughts, and actions, and how these reflect one's identity and shape relationships with other individuals, larger groups, and the world. This self-discovery process fostered at Tenacity will extend beyond this experience into students' lives and futures. We are currently tracking student progress through short-term measures (biannual tests) and working to prepare them for the challenges of high school.

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*Lobsters logo and photos used with permission of the Boston Lobsters*

## These Green Mountains

*Josh Katzman, Assistant Program Director*

Piling into a rented Chevy Tahoe packed full with seven people for a three and a half hour drive to play in a tennis tournament may not be a typical middle schooler's idea of a fun Friday night. But on February 4<sup>th</sup>, that is exactly what five competitive Tenacity players were eager to do. **Carlos Lopes** (8<sup>th</sup> grade, Edison Middle School), **Patrick Lewis** (8<sup>th</sup> grade, McCormack Middle School), **Peter Nguyen** (8<sup>th</sup> grade, McCormack Middle School), **Jonathon Leal** (7<sup>th</sup> grade, McCormack Middle School) and **Luis Perez** (7<sup>th</sup> grade, McCormack Middle School) were getting ready to attend what, for most of them, would be their first major tennis tournament. It also happened to be in Burlington, Vermont.

This trip marked the second time that I have been able to share my home state with Tenacity students. My parents, Bonnie and Richard Katzman, graciously offered to host the boys, something I was nervous about because my two young nephews, ages four years and nineteen months, also live with them. However, they made a good impression right from the start. "We were impressed with the boys' manners and their willingness to help. They picked up their belongings and helped minimize the chaos that can arise in a house filled with twelve people," Bonnie wrote after the visit.

We stayed Friday and Saturday night at the house, playing Monopoly and other board games, sledding at the local golf course, and taking a walk through the woods where a couple of deer ran in front of us, giving us all a good taste of the "country." We also took part in a Vermont tradition of spending some time on a frozen Lake Champlain. After a quick geography lesson, the boys decided to do some Tenacity-style fitness work and "walk to New York" on the frozen water. Then it was on to the ECHO Aquarium, part of the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain. It was great to learn about the ecosystem we had just walked over! It was truly an enjoyable and action-filled weekend. And did I mention there was a tennis tournament in all of this?

Hosted at the Twin Oaks Sports and Fitness Center, the 2005 Twin Oaks Mid-Winter Junior Championships was an excellent event. For Patrick, Peter, Jonathon, and Luis, it was their first major tournament. While they all lost in their first round matches, there were a lot of great points, and the experience is going to pay off down the road. Carlos had a bit more experience than the others guys and put it to good use. He won his first two matches in straight sets, then lost his semi-final match to the eventual winner. We were all impressed with his effort, playing six tough sets of tennis in one morning and afternoon.

After an action-packed weekend, all of the guys are eager to challenge themselves in more tournaments. They are also excited about returning to the Green Mountains and wanted to thank Bonnie and Richard for their hospitality and support.



*Luis Perez, Jonathan Leal, Carlos Lopes, Peter Nguyen, and Patrick Lewis enjoy a moment on a frozen Lake Champlain*

## A New Train of Thought

*Nicole Soucy, Academic Coordinator*



*ReadBoston's Sarah Farbo explains the finer points of reading aloud*

Over the Boston Public School system's February break, Tenacity staff and tutors met to hone their skills as literacy group leaders at a series of three tutor trainings. Led by Sarah Farbo, a literacy coach with **ReadBoston**, staff and tutors discussed the broad definition of literacy and a variety of strategies to help students "absorb information, understand that information, and communicate a successful response" (ReadBoston 2004). Staff and tutors practiced reading to each other, thinking out loud, and asking open-ended questions about the text. Revisiting an "imagination place" gave everyone an opportunity to relax, learn, and remind themselves of the beauty of a creative story.

These tutor training sessions are part of an ongoing professional development plan that included a series of trainings held in April, which focused on behavior management and saying goodbye. Tenacity is ever grateful for all the hard work, creativity, and enthusiasm that our tutors bring to the after-school and summer programs.





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## *Student Literacy Scores Rise!*



*Rosemary Onofri, Pedro Vaquerano, and Dylan Mitchell pose with former touring professional Katrina Adams, winner of 21 WTA titles, at Tenacity's 2005 Celebrity Tennis Pro Am & Clinic*