



PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Opening the Court to All: USTA PNW Partners with Access Tennis Seattle

New wheelchair tennis partnership expands access and community for adaptive athletes across the Puget Sound region.

A new adaptive tennis initiative is gaining momentum in the Puget Sound region, thanks to a partnership between two nonprofit organizations: USTA Pacific Northwest (USTA PNW) and Access Tennis Seattle (ATS). Together, they are expanding wheelchair tennis opportunities and building community through the sport.

Access Tennis Seattle was founded just a few years ago with a clear mission: to build community and create opportunities for individuals with disabilities to experience the joy, connection, and competition of wheelchair tennis. The organization launched programming at three area tennis centers, aiming to make the sport more inclusive and welcoming across the Puget Sound.

Still in its early stages, the program currently offers weekly wheelchair tennis sessions at Galbraith Tennis Center (GTC) in Tacoma through a partnership with USTA PNW, along with additional programming at Robinswood Tennis Center in Bellevue and Tennis Center Sand Point in Seattle.

One of the core goals of ATS is to reduce transportation barriers by ensuring no participant has to travel more than 30 minutes to attend a session. By offering programming at multiple sites across the region, the organization is creating more consistent, convenient access for adaptive athletes.

Powering Possibility Through Partnership

Founded by Anthony Anderson, Johann Tan, and Dan James, Access Tennis Seattle was created to harness the power of tennis as a vehicle for connection, empowerment, and inclusion for individuals with disabilities in the Puget Sound region.

“We were realizing we really didn’t have a vehicle for the physically disabled through the sport we love,” said James. “We all looked at each other and said, ‘why aren’t we providing this?’”

Each of the three ATS founders brings a deep, personal connection to adaptive tennis. James, for example, served as the USTA’s first national manager of wheelchair tennis and coached in five U.S. Paralympic Games, guiding his teams to 11 medals during his tenure.

Anthony Anderson competed on the wheelchair tennis circuit for 30 years, reaching a career-high world ranking of No.15 and representing the United States in the 2014 World Team Cup. Over the past decade, he has also dedicated himself to teaching and mentoring new players in the sport.

Johann Tan, general manager and co-founder of Tennis Center Sand Point, has played a key role in developing one of the region's most robust and competitive wheelchair tennis programs.

"It's really important for all of us to realize that the tennis community is family," James said. "Everybody has been engaged in saying 'this is something we want to create, this is something we want to provide.'"

The program is a natural fit at USTA PNW's Galbraith Tennis Center — a community hub in Tacoma dedicated to providing affordable, inclusive tennis opportunities for players of all ages and abilities.

"One of the most rewarding things about tennis is how accessible the sport is as an impactful vehicle for physical and social activity for players of all skill levels and abilities," said Sanja Lemes, the director of tennis and delivery for USTA PNW.

Growing Opportunity at Galbraith Tennis Center

Today, Galbraith Tennis Center offers wheelchair tennis classes every Sunday from 2:30-4 p.m. for both youth and adult adaptive athletes. Players of all skill levels are encouraged to participate.

"Whether you're new to the sport or a seasoned player, these wheelchair tennis classes offer such a welcoming and supportive environment for players to improve their tennis skills while enjoying the sport and meeting new people," Lemes said.

As the program continues to build, ATS has launched a "30 for 30" initiative to engage 30 participants in 2025 and is actively recruiting coaches to meet increasing demand.

"We're committed to providing programming for anyone who wants to play," said James. "Whether someone is discovering tennis for the first time or reconnecting with the sport, we want them to feel like they belong."

In just a short time, ATS organizers have witnessed players rediscover — or discover for the first time — a deep love for tennis. While the program has grown to include participants competing in regional tournaments, James says the most meaningful progress isn't measured by match results.

"I don't know if we'll create any of the top players in the world — and quite honestly, I don't care," he said. "What matters is that we're creating opportunities for people to find themselves. I think that's invaluable."

What began as a shared vision between three passionate advocates has become a growing movement — one that's redefining what access to tennis can look like. As Access Tennis Seattle and USTA PNW continue working together to expand opportunities for adaptive athletes, the message is clear: everyone deserves a place on the court.

Get Involved

Whether you're interested in participating, supporting, or spreading the word, there's a place for you in this growing community.

- [Sign-up for wheelchair tennis classes at Galbraith Tennis Center](#)
- [Learn more about Access Tennis Seattle](#)
- [Support inclusive tennis programs by donating here](#)