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For Immediate Release

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**USTA ANNOUNCES SECOND ROUND OF
2009 PROGRAM/PROJECT SUPPORT GRANT RECIPIENTS**

*Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association
One of 38 Community Organizations Nationwide
To Receive USTA Grant*

Grand Rapids, Mich., Oct. 27, 2009 – The USTA announced that the Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association has been awarded a Program / Project Support Grant. The grant, in the amount of \$3,000, is one of 38 grants awarded by the USTA which total \$234,000, to go along with seven Community Partnership Investment Grants which totaled \$187,500.

The grants are designed to support community based organizations who are seeking funding to support their general tennis programming, project and equipment needs. The organizations that were selected met the following criteria: increasing tennis participation, supporting tennis programming and fostering diversity with both participation and programming.

“We are excited to announce our second round of grants totaling over \$400,000. This investment will help organizations that are dedicated to using tennis as a vehicle to improve the quality of life and education for both children and adults alike,” said Kurt Kamperman, Chief Executive, Community Tennis, USTA. “These organizations are committed to growing the game of tennis by implementing important local programming such as the QuickStart Tennis play format and Jr. Team Tennis, and the USTA is proud to be able to assist them in their efforts.”

The Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association has been in existence almost 30 years. The GRWSA is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide and promote competitive and recreational opportunities for those with physical disabilities. A board of directors who are all volunteers and donate their time and efforts to our organization leads our organization and its needs. We provide adult and junior wheelchair basketball teams a 5 day sports camp for up to 70 children ages 7-18 years of age and also support our road bike racers, hand cycling team, adult wheelchair tennis, a collegiate tennis program and a growing junior tennis program as well as host an adaptive water ski clinic. We seek our financial support through fundraising efforts, golf outings, charity tennis events, private and corporate donations, selling program book ads, coupon books and writing local and national grant requests.

Lynn Bender, GRWSA’s wheelchair tennis program coordinator states, “This grant is aimed specifically at growing and advancing our junior wheelchair tennis program and will help us develop our young tennis players. It will give them the opportunities that they typically would not receive by offering more programming, purchasing additional equipment and by offering wheelchair tennis at more locations in the West Michigan area. We draw kids from a 60 mile radius in any direction of Grand Rapids to participate in our program so we are excited to open the doors to these kids to help them enjoy a sport of a lifetime just like anyone else would want the opportunity to do so. West Michigan is a huge tennis community with many supporters, volunteers and clubs to help get our program off the ground and rolling”. This grant will also help us be able to send advanced junior



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players to national level tournaments to help us develop our top players and let them compete against other athletes from across the country.”

If your child has a physical disability which prohibits them from playing competitive able bodied sports then consider wheelchair tennis. Wheelchair tennis levels the playing field for all (i.e.: paraplegics, amputees, spina bifida, any neuromuscular disorder,). If wondering if your child qualifies to compete with the GRWSA, please email Lynn Bender at lynncurt10s@yahoo.com

All grants ranged from \$2,500 to \$10,000 and are offered on a one-time basis.

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About the USTA

The USTA is the national governing body for the sport of tennis in the U.S. and the leader in promoting and developing the growth of tennis at every level -- from local communities to the highest level of the professional game. A not-for-profit organization with 730,000 members, it invests 100% of its proceeds in growing the game. It owns and operates the US Open, the highest attended annual sporting event in the world, and launched the Olympus US Open Series linking 10 summer tournaments to the US Open. In addition, it owns the 94 Pro Circuit events throughout the U.S., is a minority owner and promotional partner of World TeamTennis, and selects the teams for the Davis Cup, Fed Cup, Olympic and Paralympic Games. The USTA philanthropic entity, USTA Serves, provides grants and scholarships and through tennis, helps underserved youth and people with disabilities to improve academics, build character and strive for excellence. For more information on the USTA, log on to usta.com.

For more information, contact:

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About West Michigan Sports Commission:

The West Michigan Sports Commission's main goal is to promote Michigan's West Coast as the premier venue for hosting a diverse level of youth and amateur sporting events, enhancing the economy and quality of life in the region.