



1983 Marcus Ave., Suite C103, Lake Success, NY 11042
Days: (516) 326-6111 Fax: 437-5785
website: friendshipnetwork.org

March 27, 2006

To the attention of USTA/Eastern:

The Friendship Network, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) Queens/Nassau, has recently benefited from a \$500.00 grant that enabled several of our members to participate in tennis lessons at Cunningham Park with Andrew Weiss. Without the generosity of this grant, our members would not have been able to learn how to play tennis, nor have the social experience that goes with playing a sport.

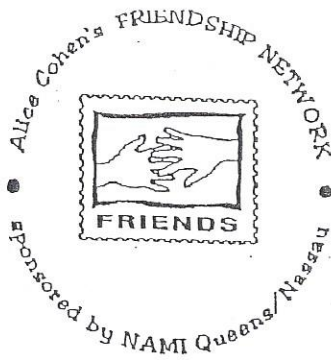
Friendship Network is a non-profit socialization program that introduces adults recovering from mental illness to each other for the purpose of friendship, provides group activities to reduce isolation and loneliness, and enhances social skills through individual and group discussions. The primary goal of Friendship Network is to assist persons with mental illness to make vital connections with others and to develop social skills and interests which will reduce isolation, enhance self-esteem and improve the quality of life of its members.

You can see how participating in a tennis program would support the goals of our members by giving them an opportunity to try a new activity, develop a new skill which would improve their self esteem and meet with others in a social setting to utilize their developing social skills. And most importantly, it provides a fun week end activity that would otherwise be spent alone and inactive.

The members of Friendship Network are mostly on fixed incomes with little extra money for entertainment and transportation. Without a grant to offset the cost of tennis lessons few, if any, of our members would be able to participate. This is a wonderful opportunity for them which we hope will be continued.

We received some notes from our tennis participants that we would like to share in part with you.

"...My experience in the beginner class has been great! Andrew has great skill in keeping the lessons moving and playing practice games. I am happy if I can get the ball over the net. ...".



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"I am writing this note to let you know that I am enjoying the tennis lessons very much. The lessons are very good for my treatment."

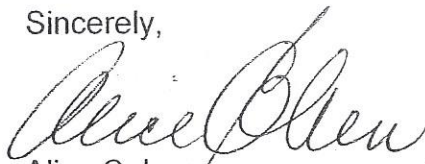
"This is to let you know that we enjoy the Sunday tennis sessions at the Cunningham Tennis Club. It would be to our benefit if you can find a way to get more funding, as we enjoy playing tennis very much. It gives us an outlet to socialize with many, to meet others and learn a skill, as well. Most of us have no money and we could never have this opportunity without your help. Continuity is very important and if we have to stop our lessons now, just as we are getting into the swing of things, we will forget everything we have learned."

"The tennis lessons in Cunningham Park have been very special to me. They have ~~allowed me to learn a new sport which previously was~~ unattainable to me. The instructions were great. Secondly, I met a lot of new people there. Thank you for offering these lessons to me."

We hope that you will be able to continue providing scholarships to Friendship Network. Being able to provide tennis lessons, as one of our weekend activities, to our members has become an essential part of our program. We hope that you will be able to continue your support in the future.

Thank you for your support and generosity.

Sincerely,


Alice Cohen



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March 27, 2008

To the attention of USTA/Eastern:

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Queens/Nassau Friendship Network is very grateful for your continued support. Our members have benefited greatly from participating in a tennis program led by a professional instructor, Andrew Weiss. Without the support of this grant, our members would not have been able to learn how to play tennis, nor have the social experience that goes with playing a sport.

Friendship Network is a non-profit socialization program that introduces adults recovering from mental illness to each other for the purpose of friendship, provides group activities to reduce isolation and loneliness, and enhances social skills through individual and group discussions. The primary goal of Friendship Network is to assist persons with mental illness to make vital connections with others and to develop social skills and interests which will reduce isolation, enhance self-esteem and improve the quality of life of its members.

You can see how participating in a tennis program would support the goals of our members by giving them an opportunity to try a new activity, develop a new skill which would improve their self esteem and meet with others in a social setting to utilize their developing social skills. And most importantly, it provides a fun week end activity that might otherwise be spent alone and inactive, providing much needed physical exercise.

The members of Friendship Network are mostly on fixed incomes with little extra money for entertainment and transportation. Without a grant to offset the cost of tennis lessons few, if any, of our members would be able to participate. This is a wonderful opportunity for them which we hope will be continued.

Recently, our member Stephen C., who has been participating regularly in the tennis program, wrote the following article for our upcoming newsletter. We wanted you to have the opportunity to read what he has to say.

Tennis Lessons at Cunningham Park

My name is Stephen C. I am a member of NAMI Q/N Friendship Network. Every other week I look forward to attending a tennis lesson with our tennis professional Andrew Weiss. Thanks Friendship Network and USTA for making this possible for me and the other members.

I had participated in tennis lessons at my high school in 1994 and 1995. I learned the forehand volley and the double hand backhand. I was introduced to the drop volley at the net. I was shown how to serve in a tennis game. I used to also play tennis with my father; but he passed away eight years ago.

All this knowledge about tennis was great. However, I hadn't had the opportunity to play since that time. But what made this new experience even better is that I made new friends at the group lessons at Cunningham Park. One fellow that I met was very amicable and we conversed with each other about our families. I really appreciated updating my tennis skills with my tennis pro Andrew. I improved my footwork and tennis racket positioning. I remembered how to grip the tennis racket and I updated my serve. All these factors with my tennis game have made me a better tennis player.

My new friendship means a lot to me since we have similar interests. I look forward to seeing him at every tennis lesson. We both feel that dedication to family is important. I also met another member there and played tennis with him for several lessons. These are two fine people and I anticipate playing the sport with them.

It has been a positive experience each time I attend lessons at Cunningham Park. I look forward to returning every time and hope that the program will continue for a long time.

Thank you,
Stephen C.

We are hopeful that you will be able to continue providing a grant to allow our Friendship Network members this wonderful opportunity. Being able to continue providing tennis lessons to our members, as one of our weekend activities has become an essential part of our program. We look forward to your continued support.

Thank you for your support and generosity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alice Cohen". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Alice Cohen
Director



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March 14, 2011

Dear Andrew,

Thank you so much for your support of Friendship Network. The grants you have received for our program has enabled our members to continue receiving tennis lessons. Over the past year we have developed an ongoing group of members who have benefitted from and look forward to playing tennis. This grant will allow this program to continue and offer our members both the physical activity and social experience that goes with playing a sport.

Friendship Network is a non-profit socialization program that introduces adults recovering from mental illness to each other for the purpose of friendship, provides group activities to reduce isolation and loneliness, and enhances social skills through individual and group discussions. The primary goal of Friendship Network is to assist persons with mental illness to make vital connections with others and to develop social skills and interests which will reduce isolation, enhance self-esteem and improve the quality of life of its members.

It is interesting to note that according to the International Journal of Social Psychiatry, even meager levels of physical activity can improve the mood of people with serious mental illnesses (SMI) such as bipolar disorder, major depression and schizophrenia, "We found a positive association between physical activity level and positive mood when low to moderate levels of physical activity are considered," said study author Bryan McCormick, associate professor in Indiana University's Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Studies. <http://psychcentral.com/news/2009/01/15/physical-activity-improves-mood-of-people-with-mental-illness/3644.html>

You can see how participating in a tennis program would support the goals of our members by giving them an opportunity to try a new activity, develop a new skill which would improve their self esteem and meet with others in a social setting to utilize their developing social skills. And most importantly, it provides a fun weekend activity for our members, which otherwise might be spent alone and inactive.

The members of Friendship Network are mostly on fixed incomes with little extra money for entertainment and transportation. Without a grant to offset the cost of tennis lessons few, if any, of our members would be able to participate. This is a wonderful opportunity for them which we are hoping to be able to continue.

One of our enthusiastic tennis players wrote the following article about tennis for our newsletter:

I have been attending tennis lessons on Sunday afternoons. It's a pleasure to participate. The instructor Andrew has helped me fine tune my tennis game. We start with a stretching exercise for the legs, hands and arms. We run from the tennis net to the end of the court and back again. We had a drill exercise for our forehand drop volley shot against the net. Then we followed with a back hand volley shot against the net. The second half of the lesson we stood at the baseline and practiced our full forehand and

learned how to serve. I got the ball over the net well with all three drills. The hardest drill was the double hand backhand. The momentum of the racket and the velocity of the ball are difficult to control.

Andrew is a terrific instructor and shares all his tennis expertise with the class. I recommend his class to anyone who is interested in the game of tennis. It's great for beginners, intermediate and advanced players. Andrew helped me brush up on my intermediate game and I am thankful for all his assistance and knowledge.

A member wrote: *"I am writing this note to let you know that I am enjoying the tennis lessons very much. The lessons are very good for my treatment."*

Another member wrote: *The tennis lessons have been very special to me. They have allowed me to learn a new sport which previously was unattainable to me. The instructions are great. Secondly, I meet a lot of new people there. Thank you for offering these lessons to me.*

Again, we thank you for providing us with this grant and the ability to continue offering this worthwhile and fun activity to our members.

Sincerely,
Alice Cohen, Director
Nancy Schlessel, LMSW



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My new friendship means a lot to me since we have similar interests. I look forward to seeing him at every tennis lesson. We both feel that dedication to family is important. I also met another member there and played tennis with him for several lessons. These are two fine people and I anticipate playing the sport with them. Recently we talked of meeting, on our own, during the week for some additional playing time. I hope we can work it out.

It has been a positive experience each time I attend tennis lessons. I look forward to returning every time and hope that the program will continue for a long time.

Thank you,
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