

# PICKLEBALL FOR A CAUSE

Now is your chance to join the 4.8 million Pickleball players in the U.S.

One group of local community leaders is trying to bring awareness and help to the mental illness crisis affecting St. Tammany Parish in a unique and fun way.

**Pickleball For A Cause** is a project team of Leadership Northshore committed to supporting the ongoing missions of two community organizations: **NAMI- St. Tammany**, whose main focus is to help individuals gain assistance for mental illness; and **Black Women Do Heal**, whose focus is to erase the stigma of mental illness with minorities.

Leadership Northshore (LNS) was established in 1990 (originally called Leadership Slidell) to identify and select highly motivated, emerging or existing leaders in business, government, and the community to participate in the program. Through monthly classes and team projects, LNS strives to groom future community leaders by helping them to develop

a renewed sense of enthusiasm and “can do” attitude in the community. They do this by educating and challenging the participants as to the needs and opportunities of the community and the dynamics of social and economic change.

LNS develops an esprit de corps among the participants to provide a common ground for working together on present and future community projects and creates a dialogue and rapport between the participants and existing community leadership. All of this leads to an increased level of commitment and participation in the community by their students and graduates.

Pickleball For A Cause team leader, Courtney Elzey, describes the LNS experience, “We learned about the St. Tammany Parish community and what it takes to be true leaders within the parish as a whole; things like Economic



**Pickleball For A Cause Team Members** (left-right): Adam Pearson, Courtney Elzey, Synthia Tate, Pamela Breaux, Diana Troyer, Greg Crum, Damianna Folse (not pictured: Robert Estopinol)

# 1/3 of Americans ages 15-54 will develop a mental illness in their lives.

(Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA))

# 1 in 5 people experience a diagnosable mental disorder in any given year. For Louisiana, this is an estimated 650,000 adults and 245,000 children.

(Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals)

Development, Government, Education...and we're still learning, there's more to come. We are getting the tools and tips to be better stewards in this community. Leadership Northshore is providing us with access to this training and giving us the tools we need."

Courtney explains why they chose their project, "Mental health issues have been a huge factor in the growth and overall health of St. Tammany Parish. There are resources out there to help you and your family deal with mental health issues; the community just needs to be aware of them. We looked for an opportunity to raise awareness and support while offering the community a chance to come together, get some exercise, and have fun." Exercise is known to be a useful combatant in the prevention and treatment of depression. Laughing, Courtney says, "Look, if I can learn how to play Pickleball, *anybody* can play it!"

For the years 2021- 2023, Pickleball was named the fastest-growing sport in the U.S. by the Sports and Fitness Industry Association. The game was created in 1965 in Washington

state by Joel Pritchard, who later served in the U.S. Congress and as Washington's lieutenant governor. The game was a spur of the moment idea to keep his family occupied by using pieces and parts from other games that were stored around the house. Because of this, it was named Pickleball by his wife, who said it reminded her of the pickle boat in rowing, when oarsmen are chosen from leftovers.

The Pickleball For A Cause Tournament will take place Sunday, April 28, 2024 at Fritchie Park Gym in Slidell. The tournament will include men's, women's, and mixed doubles. Play is open to anyone 18+ and of any skill level. The cost to play ranges from \$49-\$59, with spectator admission being only \$5. Sponsorships are still being sought for the Tournament, with great recognition for all sponsorship levels.

Registration, sponsorship, and tournament information can be found on their website: [Pickleball4acause.com](https://Pickleball4acause.com) or their Facebook Page: [Pickleball For A Cause LNS 2024](#). You can also use the QR code below.



**Keep Calm and Dill On!**



## PICKLEBALL IN THE US



**4.8 MILLION**  
players in the United States



**58,000**  
searches per month of "pickleball courts near me"



**CALIFORNIA**  
has the most locations to play pickleball



**54%**  
growth of pickleball players in last 5 years



**66**  
new locations to play every month



**11.5%**  
growth of players on average per year