



Harlem Junior Tennis & Education Program

ELEVEN HARLEM JUNIOR TENNIS & EDUCATION PROGRAM GRADUATES TO PLAY COLLEGE TENNIS

Program graduates to be honored along with Rennae Stubbs and James R. Kelly III
at annual gala on May 22nd at the Ziegfield Ballroom in New York City

NEW YORK, NY – MAY 1, 2023 – For the 50th consecutive year, graduates of the Harlem Junior Tennis & Education Program will be leveraging their success in the program to a roster spot on a college tennis program. This year, 11 program graduates will be joining hundreds of previous HJTEP graduates in becoming college tennis student-athletes. They will be recognized alongside their classmates at the **HJTEP Annual Gala** on May 22nd at the Ziegfield Ballroom in New York City. Tickets for the gala are available at www.HJTEP.org or info@dwightjohnsondesign.com

Here's a list the 11 program graduates and the colleges they will be attending: **John Boateng** [University of Saint Joseph (Connecticut)]; **Erick Conception** [Liberty University (full scholarship)]; **Kayon John** (University of Buffalo); **Jude Killikelly** (Hampton University); **Simon Mabbott** (Union University); **Cristian Ramos** (Fordham University); and twin sisters **Addison Ortiz** (Manhattanville College) and **Amaya Ortiz** (Wingate University). Additionally, three HJTEP graduates, who have received multiple offers, are still undecided: **Josiah Bartolomew** (Bard College, Howard University and Wake Forest); **Mia Edwards** (Rice University and Tufts University); and **Olivia Kunz** (Purchase University and New Paul College)

“We are proud that more than 80 percent of HJTEP graduates attend college and especially proud of these 11 youngsters who leveraged their success both in the classroom and on the court into the opportunity to play college tennis,” said Katrina Adams, Executive Director of HJTEP. “We continues to bring tennis to youth from high-risk, low-income inner-city neighborhoods while offering opportunities for self-development, emphasizing education and a positive code of behavior. Our insistence upon academic achievement, and a 3.1 average GPA helps create these opportunities.”

In addition to celebrating the success of the nearly 1,000 youngsters who benefit from the HJTEP annually, the event will also honor a pair of its most ardent supporters. It will present the **Shining Star Award** to **Rennae Stubbs**, a former number one ranked doubles players and 6-time Grand Slam champion; and the Chairman’s Award renamed this year as the **James R. Kelly III Chairman’s Award** to **James R. Kelly III**, the former HJTEP Chairman of the Board who retired last year after serving in this role for 16-years.

About HJTEP

The Harlem Junior Tennis & Education Program develops champions in tennis, education, and wellness. HJTEP continues to bring tennis to youth from high-risk, low-income inner-city neighborhoods while offering opportunities for self-development, emphasizing education and a positive code of behavior. Tennis teaches kids essential life skills, sportsmanship, self-discipline, social and emotional competence and how to lead healthier lives. HJTEP insists on academic achievement, and the average GPA of participants is 3.1. The not-for-profit organization opens a new door for many inner-city boys and girls, ages 6-18, to learn the game of tennis. And the numbers speak to its success with a 95% high school graduation rate, 25% earning a tennis scholarship, and a 3.1 GPA, and more than 80% of program graduates attending college.

Partnering with local schools and community centers, it serves students during the school year and in its summer program. What they experience on the courts, and in its education programs, develops the whole child—in sports, school, and life. Tennis teaches kids essential life skills, sportsmanship, self-discipline, social and emotional competence and how to fight obesity and lead healthier lives. In their weekly sessions, participants also learn to improve communication skills and raise their fitness levels. For more information visit www.HJTEP.org

###

Media Contact: Doug Drotman (631-897-3672 doug@drotman-pr.com)