

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ATLANTA LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION, INC.

ALTA NetNews

ALTA, WHERE ATLANTA COMES TO PLAY

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026



INTRODUCING THE 2026



ALTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



ALTA Annual Meeting p. 28

2026 Executive Committee p. 34

Winter Getaways p. 40

ALTA Partners with Agnes Scott College to Study Membership Data

At the beginning of last year, 2025 ALTA President Rita Maloof was contacted by Dr. Li Qi, Department of Economics and Business Management (and ALTA member!), from Agnes Scott College about a potential partnership utilizing her students to assist us with data analysis.

"Dr. Qi's students were used to working with case studies, and she was looking for an opportunity to work on a real-time project with community impact to which the students could relate," said Maloof.

Dr. Qi first joined ALTA in 2022 and learned a little bit about its history from the website and from *Net News* magazine. When she mentioned ALTA to tennis friends outside Atlanta; they were amazed — even jealous—of the opportunities ALTA offers to recreational players. "That made me realize how unique this organization is and piqued my curiosity about how ALTA grew to become the world's largest city tennis league," Qi said.

She was also struck by Maloof's message about connecting people and communities. "That has certainly been my personal experience. Tennis has not only taught me a new sport," she commented. "It has served as a bridge to new friendships and introduced me to neighborhoods across our city that I had never visited, even after living in Atlanta for many years."

ALTA was able to provide the student team with non-proprietary data, and they created base impressions of the organization. The records included data from 2000-2025. Maloof said this gave ALTA the opportunity to validate directional and strategic initiatives using impressions provided by an objective third party.

The data showed that ALTA has a large body of extraordinarily loyal membership. Even after the pandemic-related dip, most players returned within a few years. Over the past decade, ALTA has had more women members (56 percent) than men (44 percent). The average age of ALTA players is 45. The leagues with the highest participation are Mixed Doubles and Sunday Women, followed by Men and Thursday Women.

"The biggest surprise for my students was the geographic distribution of members," Qi said. "It has remained remarkably stable for two decades, but with a stark contrast between north and south Atlanta. There is not much tennis below I-20 (except for recent growth in the 30316 zip code)."

Qi's research showed that sustaining and growing membership requires retaining current members as well as attracting new players. Several factors influence this, including competition from pickleball, competition from other leagues such as Ultimate Tennis and T2, and access to court facilities. "Without sufficient facilities, potential players simply cannot participate," she said.

Maloof explained this is just the first phase of the project which provided a baseline around membership demographics, facility information, and league trends. Phase two will take a deeper look at resource utilization and potential growth opportunities.

"It's been such a valuable experience applying data analytics to support a community organization that promotes both tennis and connection across Atlanta," said student Jiaqi Pu.

"As a professor, I am always seeking ways to extend learning beyond the classroom and show students how their academic skills translate into real-world value," Qi added. "This project brought all of that together, making it both fun and deeply meaningful for me and my students."



Dr. Li Qi, Hal & Julia T. Professor of Free Enterprise, and data analysis interns, Jiaqi Pu; Nicole Young; Wongelawit Zerga; and Ana Janet Resendiz Avila. Not pictured: An Nguyen.



Big Plates for Horseshoe Bend

Congratulations! Five couples playing out of Horseshoe Bend Country Club in Roswell added big plates to their tennis trophy cases last fall. The Sunday Women's B3 team won City Finals, as did the Men's B3 team. Several of them play on the same mixed doubles team, too. Will there be another championship for this group? Pictured (left to right): Brennan Sullivan, Beth Sullivan, Adam Kessler, Christie Kessler, Eric Melcher (on a stick), Lindsay Melcher, Courtney Aultman, Stephen Aultman, Holly Oetting, and Clark Oetting.