

History of the North Country Tennis Association (NCTA)

The NCTA was established by a group of tennis players who has been working since July 2013 to promote tennis in the greater Watertown area. In August 2013, the group identified two goals: the long-term goal has been to build a two-court indoor facility in Watertown to be used primarily for youth instructional tennis but additionally for community recreational tennis; and, the short-term goal has been to operate a one-court recreational indoor tennis facility with the purpose of maintaining active tennis play and assessing community interest in tennis.

The NCTA was initially established as a 501c7 entity, creating the NCTA board of directors. At present, the board continues to explore: moving the NCTA from a 501c7 entity to a 501c3 entity; building a two-court indoor tennis facility; developing a successful capital campaign; pursuing possible local partnerships, especially with the Watertown YMCA; and, adding tennis instruction at the indoor facility.

The NCTA board has also been actively operating a one-court indoor tennis facility, located in a warehouse in the Jefferson County Industrial Park. During the first season, November 15, 2013 – April 15, 2014, 50 members paid a membership fee of \$400. An additional 5 members paid \$280 for a half-season membership. And, 35 members paid a fee to extend their indoor season by one month. The membership fee included requested league play and unlimited online court booking during non-league times. The guest fee for 1.5 hours of play was \$20. During this first season, the owner of the warehouse allowed the NCTA a lease cost of \$1 per month. Expenses including heat, lights, etc. were covered by the owner. In return, the NCTA agreed to give a \$5,000 donation to The Delaney Bay Fund to help with humanitarian projects in Haiti. In the spring of 2014, the NCTA hosted area high school tennis team practices. During this first indoor season, the NCTA partnered with the Watertown Y and the United States Tennis Association (USTA) to hold a one-day Youth Tennis Festival at Watertown's Fairgrounds Y. Additionally, the NCTA partnered with Watertown's Parks and Recreation Department and the Greater Watertown Chamber of Commerce to host a one-day tennis tournament which was held at Watertown High School's tennis courts.

During the second indoor tennis season, 60 members paid a membership fee of \$620. The indoor season was extended from September 15, 2014 - May 15, 2015. The fee included 1.5 hours of league play and unlimited online court booking during non-league times. Additional league time was available at \$140 for a 1.5 hours session. The guest fee for 1.5 hours of play was set at \$25. The NCTA was again charged a lease cost of \$1 per month. However, it was agreed that the NCTA would pay for its expenses through the season. The NCTA covered expenses including land taxes, insurance, legal fees, heat, lights, maintenance, etc. At the start of the second season, the NCTA awarded a youth scholarship in the amount of \$310 payable toward the membership fee of a player. The NCTA also purchased and installed an AED at its indoor tennis facility. An AED training session was offered to NCTA members. In the spring of 2015, the NCTA again hosted area high school tennis team practices. Again, the NCTA partnered with the Watertown Y and the USTA to host a second Youth Tennis Festival and the NCTA partnered with Watertown's Parks and Recreation Department and the Greater Watertown Chamber of Commerce to host a second tennis tournament.

The NCTA has again extended its season of indoor tennis play, the third season runs from September 1, 2015 – May 31, 2016. Membership rates and conditions and guest fees have remained the same as the 2014-15 indoor season. Plans for youth and adult lessons to be held at the indoor facility are underway. A two-hour youth clinic is offered on Sundays along with private and group lessons offered by a certified professional from the United States Professional Tennis Association (USPTA). Plans are also underway to continue hosting area high school tennis team practices, the Youth Tennis Festival and the one-day tennis tournament.