

## **“2008 – 2009 First Serve National Student Athletes of the Year”**

*An Inspiration to All of Us*

Thousands of inner-city young people throughout the United States had the opportunity to compete, with academic scholarships going to those with the best grades in school and junior tennis tournament results over a 12-month Competition. “The results of the Competition are astounding given the everyday challenges the competitors face”, said Trey Buchholz, Founder & CEO of First Serve National.

Case in point, the local First Serve Chapter in Miami. “Competitors come to us with homework they can’t even begin to do”, said Robert Flader, Program Manager for First Serve Miami at Moore Park. “They don’t get their own textbooks and when they do, pages are often ripped out.” However, tremendous progress, both in the classroom and on the tennis court, was made when compared to the 2007 – 2008 Competition.

In the 2008 – 2009 National Student Athlete Competition, competitors played in 371 USTA tournaments and 876 matches. Local tutoring, attested by First Serve National, totaled over 40,000 hours during the period. Competitors almost doubled last year’s number of A’s and B’s on school report cards in math, science, literary arts, and history. As a whole, competitors shattered the ’07-’08 tennis and academic results. Here are the stories behind those who ended this year as #1 in the nation in the First Serve National Student Athlete Competition.



**Jerica Coley** from **First Serve St. Petersburg, FL** trailed **Ana Ruiz** of Houston, TX by 39 points going into the last weekend. Jerica needed to win a USTA tournament (50 points) to take the #1 spot in the country. She traveled 120 miles (each way) to a tournament, won 5 straight matches, and earned the #1 spot. Jerica had 15 A’s and 1 B out of 16 grades counted and played 19 USTA tournaments, winning 22 of 37 matches. With 6,697 ranking points, Jerica Coley won the nation’s #1 spot in the Girls High School Division for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row, accumulating \$10,000 in college scholarship funds.



**Jamiya McGriff**, then soon-to-be 5<sup>th</sup> grader, joined family and friends in July of 2008, as her first cousin, Jerica Coley, was declared the nation’s #1 in the ’07-’08 Competition. Jamiya, from the audience, vowed that she would be up there one day. Sure enough, she made it happen just a year later. Jamiya had 16 A’s out of 16 grades counted and played 9 tournaments, winning 14 of 22 matches, for a total of 6,639 ranking points, to become the nation’s #1 in the Girls Lower/Middle school Division.



**Wesley Augustine** from **Youth Tennis Advantage** at **UC-Berkeley** won the nation's top spot in the Boys High School Division. While Wesley only played 6 tournaments, it was his perfect 16 A's out of 16 grades counted that earned him the nation's top spot.



**Mou Doddipalli** from **Zina Academy** in **Houston, TX** earned 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the 07-08 Competition by a tie-breaker. Mou took no chances this year with 16 of 16 A's, played 35 tournaments, winning 67 of 101 matches, for a total of 7,079 ranking points. "I didn't expect the 7,000 point barrier to be broken for many years", said Trey Buchholz, Founder and CEO of First Serve National.

In addition to the \$5,000 academic scholarship fund earned by each of the nations' #1's, they will also spend a day at the 2009 U.S. Open next month.

The **2009 - 2010 First Serve National Student Athlete Competition** has just begun. Competitors from 20 states and Washington, D.C. are expected to enter.