



USTA NORTH CAROLINA

# WHEEL SERVE NC

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Wheel Serve NC Established to  
Grow, Promote and Support  
Wheelchair Tennis

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Wheel Serve NC is North Carolina's newest community tennis association and was established to expose athletes with a physical disability to the sport of tennis.

"Wheel Serve NC was created because we recognized the need for more wheelchair tennis programs in our state," Co-Executive Director Kelly Flouhouse said. "After many years of being part of a successful and sustainable weekly wheelchair tennis program in Charlotte, we realized that others across the state could benefit from similar programming."

Kelly teamed up with Co-Executive Director Helen Leonard, volunteers, pros and players to replicate similar programming across the state and quickly realized that it could be done on a larger scale.

"These programs are and will be designed to grow wheelchair tennis from the ground-up instead of the top-down," Flouhouse said. "We want all players to know that whether they are a beginner or an elite athlete that they are welcome to join us. So much good will come from taking the leap and reaching out to join one of our programs."

Wheel Serve NC's purpose, as stated on its website, is "to grow, promote and support wheelchair tennis in North Carolina by creating more opportunities to play and compete across the state whether at a recreational or competitive-level of play." Additionally, Wheel Serve NC contributes toward "improving a person's overall well-being while instilling confidence in one's capabilities through participation in adaptive sport."

"Our goals for Wheel Serve NC are to create more opportunities to play wheelchair tennis by creating additional programming strategically located throughout the state, to integrate wheelchair players into existing able-bodied leagues and clinics as well as create a pathway to competition for players who are not quite at the tournament level of tennis," Flouhouse said. "Finally, we aim to educate the able-bodied tennis community on the benefits of wheelchair tennis and advocate for those with a physical disability within our tennis communities."

Amy Franklin, Director of Development & Programs for the North Carolina Tennis Foundation, said Wheel Serve NC is much more than just tennis.

"Their programming provides opportunities for education, socialization, competitiveness and inclusiveness," Franklin said. "Perhaps most importantly, they have the ability to meet the wheelchair athlete exactly where they are - no matter their level of play. The goal is to provide an enjoyable experience for everyone involved."

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed down Wheel Serve NC's ability to be on court, its Board of Directors and volunteers have used this time to further develop opportunities for wheelchair tennis players throughout the state.

"Wheel Serve NC will definitely have an incredible impact on the wheelchair community in North Carolina," Franklin said. "Consistent, quality tennis programming will be available across the state providing many more play and volunteer opportunities for all involved."

To learn more about Wheel Serve NC, visit [wheelservenc.com](http://wheelservenc.com).