



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Tennis Star Frances Tiafoe Plays It Forward for Military Families
Joins ThanksUSA Team Advancing Education and Career Opportunities***

July 29, 2019, McLean VA – Talent, athleticism, fierce play and commitment have elevated American tennis star **Frances Tiafoe** to ever greater heights in the sport. Today, he brings his big heart and those powerful traits to another mission – helping open doors for the children and spouses of our military.

ThanksUSA, the national non-profit organization that provides scholarships to military families, today announced that the 21-year-old has joined its team as a national spokesperson.

“Frances understands what it means to make sacrifices to achieve a dream,” said ThanksUSA president Jon Rosa, in making the announcement. “He is a young man built from the inside-out: compassionate, devoted to his family, and willing to put in the hard work necessary to reach his goals. His dedication to being the best he can be resonates with ThanksUSA’s core mission.”

Tiafoe lives by his mantra *be obsessed with being great*. Now ranked 41st in the world, he captured his first ATP Tour title in 2018 at the Delray Beach Open and this year reached the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam for the first time at the 2019 Australian Open. He and his twin brother Franklin picked up racquets at age four at the Maryland tennis complex where their father Constant was the caretaker. Both their father and mother, Alphina, escaped civil war in Sierra Leone, and the family experienced instability in their family housing situation just as many military families do.

“I know what it’s like watching your parents sacrifice everything to give you every opportunity in life. I’m blessed,” said Frances about teaming with ThanksUSA. “Our military families sacrifice so much. Their loved ones put their lives on the line. They move constantly and their lives are disrupted by deployments. I am thrilled to help tell their stories.”

Armed Forces families identify education as a primary concern and financial burden: over a 20-year career, enlisted service members earn less than \$46,000 annually. Military families are also 27% less likely to have dual incomes.

“A post-secondary school education is critical to ensuring the lives of our military children and spouses are fulfilling and productive,” says Rosa. “ThanksUSA receives more than 2,000 applications every year for scholarships. That is an enormous need and Frances is able to boost awareness of these challenges with both his inspiring play and his personal story.”

Tiafoe's national profile will raise awareness of ThanksUSA's scholarship and career enhancement programs. He will also serve as ambassador of ThanksUSA's **Tennis Corps**, a premiere tennis mentoring program for Veterans and youth that promotes social inclusion, tolerance, and passion for the sport and will assist in expanding the program.

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About ThanksUSA:

ThanksUSA is a 501(c)(3) organization that provides need-based scholarships and pathways to employment for children and spouses of military personnel, with special emphasis given to those who lost a loved one in service to America. Since 2006, ThanksUSA has awarded more than \$14 million in scholarships to recipients from all 50 states and representing every branch of the military. Learn more at www.ThanksUSA.org.

About Tennis Corps:

Tennis Corps is a premiere tennis mentoring program for Veterans and youth that promotes social inclusion, tolerance, and passion for the sport. In its debut, ThanksUSA and JTCC, one of the nation's leading tennis training facilities, have partnered to connect youth players with military Veterans creating an environment of positive role models and community engagement. With mutual respect and camaraderie, Veterans also benefit through the rehabilitative effects of weekly adaptive tennis clinics and social interaction.