



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 3, 2019

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ThanksUSA Partners with Professional Pickleball Registry to Support Military Families

McLean, VA (April 3, 2019) – People of all ages are enjoying the sport of Pickleball, making it one of America’s fastest growing sports. In coming weeks this new army of athletes will be partnering with **ThanksUSA** to support military children and spouses in reaching their educational and career aspirations.

The national scholarship organization today announced that **Professional Pickleball Registry (PPR)** is supporting its ***Play It Forward Charity Challenge*** (ThanksUSA.org/GameOn), in which coaches combine PLAYING their favorite sport with PAYING it forward by making a personal donation of thanks to our military.

“More than 3 million pickleball players of all ages are obsessed with the sport and have made it a top recreational outlet,” said ThanksUSA Chairman Bob Okun, in making the announcement. “The Professional Pickleball Registry will be helping us channel that dedication and passion to our service members and their families. PPR will be introducing the mission of ThanksUSA to an energetic new audience.”

The campaign will kick off in May, Military Appreciation Month. Host facilities and PPR members will collaborate with ThanksUSA on fundraising and awareness efforts aimed to support military families by providing need-based scholarships and pathways to employment.

“PPR is honored to support the Play It Forward Challenge,” said Dan Santorum, PPR CEO. “PPR’s mission is to educate, so what better way to support our troops than by helping to educate their families? We encourage PPR members to host pickleball events and donate the proceeds to ThanksUSA.”

PPR was launched June 5, 2018, as a training and certification organization for coaches and already has a global reach. The sport itself emerged in the 1960s, but has exploded in the last several years; there are almost 21,000 pickleball courts across the country, according to the [Sports & Fitness Industry Association](https://www.sportsandfitnessindustry.com).

Pickleball is a combination of tennis, badminton and ping-pong. Games are played on a court roughly half the size of a tennis court with a modified net and players wielding paddles to score points with a whiffle ball.

“Pickleball players and coaches are an enthusiastic and competitive bunch,” Santorum continued. “If we can harness some of that energy with a direct challenge, there’s no telling how much PPR members can raise for ThanksUSA.”

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To make a donation to ThanksUSA, text **GAMEON** to **41444** or visit www.ThanksUSA.org/GameOn.

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 PPR

PPR is dedicated to educating, certifying and serving pickleball teaching professionals and coaches around the world in order to grow the game. PPR is the largest global organization of pickleball teaching pros with more than 1,250 members in all 50 states and 11 countries. PPR is a subsidiary of Professional Tennis Registry, the largest global organization of tennis teaching professional and coaches with nearly 16,500 members in 125 countries. For more information, visit PPRpickleball.org.