

March 13, 2024

Preston, a 3rd-grade student, is part of the AYTEF SET program. His family joined AYTEF in 2022, initially to help Preston, who was shy and lacked confidence, by introducing him to sports. When he first picked up a racquet, Preston was unsure of himself and struggled to connect with others in the program. However, his experience with AYTEF has been transformative. He has made significant progress, gaining confidence not only on the court but also in other enrichment activities. Preston has advanced from the afterschool program to the competitive pathway, where he participates in various events such as Team Challenges, USTA Junior Team Tennis, and USTA Junior Circuit events.

Donna, Preston's grandmother, has played a crucial role in supporting his involvement in AYTEF. Below are excerpts from her heartfelt testimonial about Preston's journey with the organization.

"At first, he (Preston) was not that interested in playing as much because he had no knowledge about tennis and found it boring. However, as a family we decided to keep him in the program because it's always good to learn something new. This effort is a family affair because I am involved most of the time and take him to practice when his parents are not available. Even though he didn't want to, we still would take him 3 days a week. There were times when Preston would complain that he cannot hit the ball and would get frustrated and cry.

The block parties on the last Friday of each month would be the best part for him at first. The kids would receive rubber bands each time their ball hit an object, and at the end of the party, the kids would tally up their bands and exchange the rubber bands for a gift. Preston is very competitive, and this is where he begins to show interest. Now, Preston has come to love the sport. Attending AYTEF has made such a difference in Preston's life both on and off the court. He has developed his skills and gained so much confidence from this program. He has become so confident that he decided to teach his grandmother how to play tennis!

Preston has won several awards at AYTEF such as master of mathematics, student athlete of the month, and the sportsmanship award. Now, Preston refuses to miss a game and will remind us on the days he has practice because he doesn't want to miss playing or be late. The AYTEF organization has embraced Preston from his first day being in the program and continues to do so. Now Preston is so focused on playing, learning, and achieving his goals which include playing

tennis. Thank you AYTEF and all the wonderful coaches and educators who played a part in Preston's growth and love for the game of tennis.”



6075 The Corners Pkwy, Ste 100
Peachtree Corners, GA 30092



www.aytef.org



(770) 702-0624

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