

CBS Summerfest: Award Winning Urban Tennis Program Creating First Generation Tennis Players In Reading

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READING, Pa. (CBS) — There's more than baseball in Reading. It's home to an award-winning urban tennis program, COR Tennis.

At Hampden Park in Reading, coach Larry Zerbe is putting kids through their paces.

"Eyes up! COR Tennis! Let's go! Play!" Zerbe calls out as the players jump into position.

For a dozen years, COR Tennis has offered low-cost tennis lessons and teams to thousands of children and adults.

"One of our mottos is #TennisForAll," Zerbe said.

Zerbe is director of tennis education for the Reading Recreation Commission.

This summer, more than 600 children ages 5 to 18 are participating in COR Tennis, including 14-year-old Ashley Retana, who started when she was 7.

"I've gotten really good at it, thanks to Coach Zerbe and all of them," Ashley said.

COR Tennis brings together people of every socioeconomic background, some of whom might never have learned tennis, Zerbe said.

"Because we have first-generation tennis players that are 5 and 6 years old, they're bringing it up to the rest of their family, and that's really a beautiful thing to see," Zerbe said.

The Reading Recreation Commission estimates COR Tennis has impacted more than 25,000 people over the last 12 years.

"This whole group is like a big family and we support each other here," Retana said. "I wanna keep playing for the rest of my life!"

UKEE WASHINGTON