

Suffolk County Boys Honored at Varsity Tennis Awards Dinner

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The Suffolk County Junior Tennis League (SCJTL) revived the Boys Varsity Tennis Awards Dinner with a resoundingly successful event on May 25. This event had not been held in three seasons, but made a strong comeback this year thanks to the effort of SCJTL staff of Joe Arias, Donna Arias, Jimmy Delevante, Josh Wolfson and Paige Lawrence with the support of John Valente, athletic director at Harborfields High School and Boys Tennis Chairman for Suffolk County.

Bob Davis, Harborfields High School Boys Varsity Tennis Coach and president of the Suffolk County Girls Tennis Coaches Association, had been running the dinner for several years and helped SCJTL to put together a memorable night for members of Suffolk County Boys Varsity Tennis teams. The dinner was held at Villa Lombardi's in Holbrook, N.Y. and featured teams from every league in Suffolk County.

More than 195 awards were presented, along with many raffle prizes from Gamma Sports and Grand Slam Tennis in Commack, N.Y. On hand for the event were Shane Helfner, who presented winners of \$500 SCJTL Sportsmanship Scholarship; and Jenny Schnitzer, USTA/Eastern Section Managing Director of USTA Player & Network Services &

USTA Competitive Tennis, served as the keynote speaker of the event, encouraging the boys to increase participation in tennis through USTA Junior Team Tennis, tournament play and college club tennis.

The big award winners at the event were Half Hollow Hills East (winner of the Suffolk County Team Championship), Patchogue-Medford, Bay Shore and Westhampton. The All-State players, who also received awards at the dinner, continued their season by advancing to the State Championships held at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in Flushing. The teams of Chris Hunter & Eric Bertuglia from Half Hollow Hills East, Kevin Serina & Nick Bauer from East Islip High School, and Spencer Kuzon & Trippie Franz-Tuff from Ross High School moved on to compete for the State Doubles Championship, while Nolan Gelman from Half Hollow Hills West, Richard Sipala from Ross High School and Zain Ali from Half Hollow Hills East High School went on to play in the Boys Varsity State Championship Tournament.

“The SCJTL is committed to organizing this award dinner every year for the boys,” said Joe Arias. “Next year’s theme will be to celebrate the Boys Varsity Tennis Season with the goal of encouraging every tennis Boys Varsity Tennis team in Suffolk County to attend.”