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## **CARLOTA LEE RECEIVES TENNIS CANADA'S INAUGURAL PRIX JACQUELINE L. BOUTET AWARD**

*Award will be handed out annually at the Unmatched: Gender Equity in Sports conference*

**TORONTO, ON (August 25, 2023)** – Carlota Lee received Tennis Canada's inaugural Prix Jacqueline L. Boutet Award on Wednesday, August 9 at the Unmatched: Gender Equity in Sports conference.

Named after the late Jacqueline Lemieux Boutet, the award will be handed out annually at the conference to an individual whose lifelong contributions in tennis helped make a meaningful and lasting impact on helping make the sport more equitable, inclusive, and accessible in Canada, particularly for women and girls.

"I am incredibly proud that Tennis Canada believes that my mother has made a difference in the organization. Making a difference is something that we all aspire to in one way or another," said Mark Boutet, Jacqueline's son, at the Unmatched conference. "Speaking of making a difference, when I read about the recipient of this award, I could see my mother in so many ways."

"I can assure you that my mother would be humbled to see that the person who has made such an exceptional contribution to the development of tennis in her community would be receiving an award bearing her name."

Boutet served as the chair of Tennis Canada's Board of Directors from 1995 to 1998, becoming the first woman to hold the position in the history of the organization. As a member of the Board of Directors, she played a pivotal role in lobbying the government to raise the necessary funds to help construct the Tennis Centre in Jarry Park, known today as IGA Stadium. It was under her leadership in 1996 that the new stadium came to be, with a focus on elevating the Canadian Open into the world-renowned tournament its known as today.

The recipient of the inaugural award, Carlota Lee, helped build the Odium Brown Vancouver Open into one of the most prestigious challenger tournaments in the world. Serving as tournament chair of the combined ATP Challenger Tour and WTA 125 event,



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Lee has played a vital role in helping many young Canadian players, including young women, jumpstart their pro careers.

Lee became chair of the tournament in 2017 but was involved with the event for nearly two decades prior. One of her biggest accomplishments related to growing the tournament is managing its housing program, which has become a signature of the event. By fostering relationships with over 50 families in West Vancouver, players could board with them while attending the tournament to avoid having to pay hotel costs and to get perks such as receiving home-cooked meals and getting to take in the natural beauty of Vancouver.

“I accept this award with immense pride and renewed commitment to creating an even more inclusive and accessible community to all Canadians,” said Lee at the Unmatched conference.

“Together, let’s build a legacy that will inspire generations to come, just as Jacqueline Boutet inspired us all.”

Beyond tennis, Lee is also a big philanthropist alongside her husband, Derek. Since being diagnosed with advanced Parkinson’s in 2019, they’ve helped raise over \$500,000 through UBC’s Parkinson’s Research Institute. They’ve also raised nearly \$6,000,000 for the Centre of Childhood Studies at Capilano University.

“I couldn’t think of a better recipient for our inaugural Prix Jacqueline L. Boutet Award than Carlota Lee,” said Eva Havaris, Tennis Canada’s Vice-President of Tennis Participation and Partnerships. “Carlota has spent a lifetime dedicating herself to growing the game of tennis on the West coast and supporting the next generation of female talent within Canadian tennis. She continually inspires many of us at Tennis Canada to raise the bar for women and girls and support them in their endeavours to reach their full potential on and off the court. Thank you for all of your contributions over the years, Carlota.”

## **About Tennis Canada**

Founded in 1890, Tennis Canada is a non-profit, national sport association with a mission to lead the growth, development and promotion of tennis in Canada and a vision to be a world-leading tennis nation. We value teamwork, passion, integrity, innovation and excellence. Tennis Canada owns and operates the premier National Bank Open



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presented by Rogers WTA and ATP Tour events, four professional ATP and ITF sanctioned events and financially supports four other professional tournaments in Canada. Tennis Canada operates junior national training centres/programs in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Tennis Canada is a proud member of the International Tennis Federation, the Canadian Olympic Committee and the Canadian Paralympic Committee, and serves to administer, sponsor and select the teams for Davis Cup, Billie Jean King Cup, the Olympic and Paralympic Games and all wheelchair, junior and senior national teams. Tennis Canada invests its surplus into tennis development. For more information on Tennis Canada please visit our Web site at: [www.tenniscanada.com](http://www.tenniscanada.com) and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

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