

Arthur Ashe

Some say that winning the 1968 US Open as the first African American Male was Arthur Ashe's greatest accomplishment. I disagree. An accomplishment it was, for he broke the racial barriers in the tennis world. However, to say that it was his greatest accomplishment would cast a shadow over his many other legacies, making people forget that he was also a social activist, championing important social issues such as racial prejudice, AIDS, apartheid, and education.

As a passionate tennis player myself, I often dream of becoming the first Vietnamese woman to win the US Open. However, I know deep in my heart that even that achievement should not be considered the be all and end all my life. In all possibility, I would see it as a steppingstone to something more profound, more lasting, and beneficial to a lot of people.

I believe that is why Arthur Ashe founded the National Junior Tennis and Learning, providing opportunities for those teenagers like myself, who love the game of tennis but also value education. I cherish and deeply admire Arthur Ashe for this, because I know that tennis alone will not prepare you for a secure and stable future, seeing that only a handful of people have become Grand Slam winners. At the same time, an education without sports cannot be called all-round.

Thus, the more I love tennis, the more I see Arthur Ashe's great wisdom: Staying in school and playing tennis are essentially the two sides of an all-round education, at least for a number of teenagers, including myself, for they complement each other very well. And who says we cannot excel in both?

In light of this view, I must conclude that the foundation of the National Junior Tennis and Learning is Arthur Ashe's greatest accomplishment.

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