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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Steve Zalinski to Retire from USTA Southern after Nine Years

HAD 50-YEAR CAREER IN TENNIS INDUSTRY

ATLANTA – December 12, 2016 – USTA Southern announced today the retirement of Steve Zalinski, the USTA Southern tennis service representative for South Carolina. Zalinski, of Daniel Island, S.C. will retire on Dec. 31 after nine successful years of growing tennis in South Carolina.

Zalinski joined USTA Southern in 2007 and has been a cornerstone in expanding tennis participation the game in his home state. Known for his outgoing and warm personality, Zalinski made friends throughout the tennis industry with his breath of knowledge and enthusiastic love of the game. He has made notable inroads in promoting youth tennis including introduction of 10 & under tennis, Junior Team Tennis and, this year, the Youth Tennis Progression.

A native of Chicago, Ill., he made his mark as a top junior player in the area, played for DePaul University and won the 35 and Over National Public Parks Championships in singles and doubles. His family was honored with the USTA South Carolina Family of the Year award. Upon announcement of his retirement, he was given the USTA South Carolina Special Recognition Award by USTA South Carolina President Bob Peiffer.

Prior to joining the USTA Southern, he was the vice president of Sales for Dunlop/Slazenger in the Pro Shop/Specialty area for 18 years. Earlier he worked with Wilson Sporting Goods and Prince Manufacturing. Zalinski was also director of tennis at Chicago's Midtown Athletic Club.

Late in 2015, Zalinski announced he was cutting back on his full-time duties and has since worked part-time, covering the state south of I-20.

USTA Southern Executive Director and COO John Callen said, "Steve has been strong contributor to the growth of tennis in the Palmetto State, making a huge difference in the sport's impact. We wish Steve and his family, health and happiness in the future and we hopes he will consider volunteering in tennis in the future."

Bill Ozaki, USTA Southern director of programs and player development, also lauded Zalinski's service. "Steve is a 'people person' who makes everyone feel comfortable. Thanks in large part to his work, we've had great improvement in programs in South Carolina." Zalinski and Ozaki have been known each other since 1988.

The tennis service representative position, which was created in 2005, functions within USTA Southern's Programs and Player Development Department. The TSR team's goal is to increase participation in tennis by promoting, developing and servicing tennis programs in assigned areas through the establishment of strong relationships with local tennis facilities, industry organizations and non-tennis entities. While South Carolina has two (part-time) TSRs and Georgia has two (one with administrative duties), the section's seven other states are covered by one. USTA Southern also employs an Hispanic outreach TSR.

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The **USTA** is the national governing body for the sport of tennis in the U.S. and the leader in promoting and developing the growth of tennis at every level – from local communities to the highest level of the professional game. It owns and operates the US Open, the largest annually attended sporting event in the world, and launched the **Emirates Airline US Open Series** linking seven summer tournaments to the US Open. In addition, it owns about 90 Pro Circuit events throughout the U.S., and selects the teams for the Davis Cup, Fed Cup, Olympic and Paralympic games. A not-for-profit organization with more than 657,000 members, it invests 100 percent of its proceeds in growing the game. It is divided into 17 sections, of which **USTA Southern** is the largest. The 160,000+ USTA members living in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee make up USTA Southern, and account for nearly 25 percent of the total USTA membership. A professional staff housed in Peachtree Corners, Ga., carries out USTA Southern's daily operations, but policy is formed and much of the organization's work is executed via a board and committee structure of more than 200 volunteers. For more information about the types of programs and services offered by USTA Southern, visit www.southerntennis.com.

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