

# Gold Medal Olympians Help Educators Teach Grit, Passion, and Purpose to Youth

*Olympians like Novak Djokovic, Kerri Walsh Jennings, Maggie Steffens, Bode Miller use mentorship at The ICL Foundation to inspire & educate the next generation*



**ICL**  
ACADEMY

VIRTUAL  
PRIVATE  
SCHOOL  
GRADES 5-12

*Building Champions for Life*



**THE ICL FOUNDATION**

ICL Academy & the ICL Foundation

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, August 20, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Fresh off of his Olympic gold medal in Paris, Serbian tennis champion Novak Djokovic offers lessons in grit, passion and purpose, not just to rising tennis stars, but to many young people striving to be champions in their chosen pursuits.



With the help of our champion mentors, we can teach students the importance of resilience, the courage to take risks, and the power of leading by example."

*Kirk Spahn, ICL Academy  
Founder*

At 37, Djokovic is the oldest man to win the Olympic singles title since tennis returned to the Games in 1988.

Remarkably, he did it 21 days after being beaten by Alcaraz in the Wimbledon final, and two months after undergoing knee surgery.

"I won the bronze in my first Olympic Games (2008) and ever since then failed to win the medal, and played three out of four Olympic Games in semi-finals and couldn't overcome that obstacle," Djokovic, wearing his gold medal,

told reporters. "When I take everything into consideration, this probably is the biggest sporting success I've ever had in my career."

Djokovic, along with Olympic legends Kerri Walsh Jennings, Maggie Steffens, Bode Miller, Vincent Zhou, Monica Seles, Michael Hixon and Steve Nash all volunteer their time as champion mentors for [the ICL Foundation](#) and ICL's accredited virtual school for 5th-12th grade, [ICL Academy](#). The ICL Foundation supports high performance individuals (e.g. athletes, actors, recording artists) so they can pursue their primary passion while getting an exceptional education.

As an ICL Foundation champion mentor, Djokovic dispenses sage advice while offering inspiration to ICL students. "We don't talk as much as we should about emotional balance and stability and purpose. You need to optimize all of that. You need to balance everything out. You need to find a way to make everything work in order to get the best out of all aspects of your

being, of your existence.

“Discipline is something that gets you going. It's great to have ideas, but if you don't have the discipline, how can you actually get to where you want to be? I think many projects or ideas fail because they never get a chance to live. The only way we can get these things to live is for us to actually start doing something about it. I like to see myself more as a doer in life. Yes, a dreamer, but also somebody that likes to take action. So whenever I get a hold of some new information that is valuable for my own health and well-being and performance, I never let go.”

Ariana Anazagasty-Pursoo, 18, is a recent ICL Academy alum, and one of the top junior tennis players in the world. “Because of ICL, I've had the opportunity to interact and learn from some of my tennis heroes,” says Anazagasty-Pursoo. “Those kinds of mentors are so inspiring because sometimes the tennis journey can be daunting. But meeting them and hearing that their stories are similar to mine, it really keeps me going. It motivates me to feel like, okay, I'm on the right track, I'm doing the right thing, and I can do this.”



Olympians Bode Miller (L) and Novak Djokovic (center) with ICL Academy Founder Kirk Spahn



Olympic champion Novak Djokovic shows off his gold medal to the crowd in Paris

The ICL Foundation is leveraging the unparalleled experiences and insights of Olympic legends to inspire and educate the next generation of youth leaders and potential Olympians. By integrating mentorship from world champions like Djokovic, Jennings, Steffens and Miller into its innovative Impact Learning model, ICL is setting a new standard for education that combines academic excellence with personal development. The mentorship from these champions helps students develop the mental toughness, self-awareness, and leadership skills needed to succeed in any field they choose.

"Our mission at ICL is to inspire, educate, and support the next generation of young students to have a positive impact on their local and global communities," says Kirk Spahn, Founder of the ICL Foundation. "With the help of our champion mentors, we can teach students the importance of resilience, the courage to take risks, and the power of leading by example. This approach mirrors the journeys of many Olympians, who have had to balance intense training with education, personal development, and community involvement."

Djokovic shares a dose of humility about his historic victory. "I can be very self critical. That's one of my biggest internal battles, that I feel like I haven't done enough or been enough in my life on and off the court. So it's a big

lesson for me. I'm super grateful for the blessing to win a historic gold medal for my country, to complete the golden slam, to complete all the records."

#### About The ICL Foundation

The ICL Foundation's mission for over 2 decades has been to inspire, educate and support aspiring youth leaders to make a positive impact on their local and global community.

Now in its 23rd year, the ICL Foundation is dedicated to shaping a future where flexible, world-class education becomes economically accessible to all high-achieving students. For students, based on need and merit, the Impact Learning Model™ enables high performing students to emerge as leaders within the global community. This combines elite accredited courses, character and service leadership training, mentorship, mental skills training, and real world application. The ICL foundation includes global icons and world champions as mentors to the ICL Fellows. Champions mentors include: Novak Djokovic, Monica Seles, Bode Miller, Nirav Tolia, Clive Davis, Neil Degrass Tyson, Malcolm Gladwell, Kerri Walsh Jennings, Steve Nash, Bode Miller, and many others

#### About ICL Academy

Born out of the ICL Foundation's Impact Learning Model™, ICL Academy offers world-class academics in a year-round accredited online school. In 2015, the first incarnation of ICL Academy was founded by educator Kirk Spahn, and accredited as a grade 5-12 hybrid school in Los



Bode Miller shares his story of grit and determination with ICL Academy students

Angeles, focused on performing arts students. In 2019, ICL Academy became a fully online school, and expanded to meet the needs of driven students across the country. ICL's vibrant community was built on, and continues to revolve around, the foundation of the 6 P's: Passion, Purpose, Process, Perspective, Perseverance, and Personalization.

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