

Coaching Kids to Academic Success

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A Tulane alumna and former tennis stand-out who has won countless prizes, Anna Monhartova is especially pleased with her latest win, which she says goes to at-risk children of New Orleans. She received this year's 2010 Timothy Sykes Daytrading Award for the Talented.



Anna Monhartova works with an elementary student at Edward Hynes Charter School in the First Serve life skills curriculum. Students prepared posters to show what they learned in the program. (Photo from A's & Aces)

With former Tulane tennis coach David Schumacher, Monhartova founded [A's & Aces](#), a nonprofit organization that supplements education opportunities for public school children through academic assistance, life-skills instruction and tennis.

A native of the Czech Republic, she played internationally on her home country's national team for four years. Monhartova came to Tulane University on a tennis scholarship, and she was a top-10 nationally ranked college player who was selected as the Conference USA Player of the Decade. She earned her bachelor's degree in 2001 and a PhD in international development in 2008 from Tulane.

Monhartova has embraced A's & Aces as a way to combine her tennis skills with a passion to facilitate social change.

As an adjunct assistant professor in the [Payson Center for International Development](#) at Tulane, Monhartova has been the driving force behind the service-learning component in international development classes. During the academic year, more than 100 adult volunteers and service-learning students work alongside the 20 part-time employees of A's & Aces.

The ultimate goal for A's & Aces is to build a hub tutoring facility with tennis courts that will host “path to college” programming and provide a sustainable social entrepreneurship operating model. She works every day toward that goal.

“I want these kids to realize there's a 13th grade, that college is something they can do,” Monhartova says.

The [Timothy Sykes Award](#) is a cash prize presented yearly to a Tulane staff member, faculty member or alumnus with a creative or “out-of-the-box” idea. Sykes, who graduated from Tulane in 2003, is the author of *An American Hedge Fund* and a prominent publisher of financial newsletters.