

## ESTHER LAMPTEY



Once Africa's female table tennis champion, Esther Lamptey now has her sights set on the National Senior Games.

Lamptey, who lives in Midwest City, began playing table tennis at age 9 in Ghana. She spent more than a decade training with D. G. Hathramani, an Indian man credited with Ghana's surge in the sport in the '60s and '70s. Lamptey and other local children lived with Hathramani, attended school, practiced and competed together.

Lamptey began competing in 1973, and in 1980 she won the women's singles title at the African Championships in Dakar.

The 56-year-old nurse competes in women's singles, women's doubles and mixed doubles events. She plans to enter the Oklahoma Senior Games table tennis tournament this fall to qualify for the 2021 National Senior Games Championships in Fort Lauderdale..

"I compete to travel and make friends and not winning as much anymore," Lamptey said. "Friendship is No. 1 now. Winning comes second to friendship and traveling to new places."

In 2016, Lamptey retired from her job as Chief Inspector for the Ghana Police Service and moved to Oklahoma to be close to her daughter.

Lamptey is a coach at the Oklahoma City Table Tennis Club and an umpire for international competitions. Last April, she returned to Ghana to officiate the 2019 Junior and Cadet Open.

Lampzey said she has found a home-away-from-home at the Oklahoma City Table Tennis Club, where she plays weekly and met her partner for women's doubles, Linda Piatt.

Lampzey's first time at the National Senior Games Championships was in 2019 in Albuquerque. She and Piatt took first in women's doubles at the state games this spring. Lampzey also won first in women's singles with Piatt on her heels in second place.

Lampzey is grateful she was introduced to table tennis at a young age because it is something she can continue playing as she ages.

"Working in medicine, I see people younger than me who can't move or do anything," Lampzey said. "But if they were involved in table tennis, or another sport, it wouldn't be that way. That's why I'll keep playing as long as I can."

Oklahoma Senior Games competitions occur annually in September and October. This year, competitions will be held in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Shawnee, Norman, Yukon and Warr Acres.

Events include three-on-three basketball, track and field, golf, swimming, water walking, 5K and 10K runs, 5K power walk, 5K race walk, bowling, tennis, table tennis, golf croquet, shuffleboard, cycling, cornhole, badminton, archery, pickleball, racquetball, softball and triathlon. Participants age 50 and older will compete in categories by age and gender.

Oklahoma Senior Games qualifies athletes for National Senior Games competition held every two years. About 300 athletes who qualify in 2020 will represent Oklahoma in the National Senior Games competition November 5-18, 2021 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

For more information visit [www.okseniorgames.com](http://www.okseniorgames.com) or call (405) 821-1500.