

A sure sign of progress comes with the normalization of something previously thought of as notable. For Virginia Amateur Sports, awarding as many medals at the Commonwealth Games to female competitors as males doesn't bear mentioning. Having a softball showcase alongside the baseball showcase is standard operating procedure.

Opportunities to participate in women's sports are on equal footing with men's sports throughout the United States, thanks to Title IX. That act was made federal law on June 23, 1972.

To honor the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its enactment, the Virginia High School League is holding a special luncheon celebration on that very day, June 23, from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at Alumni Hall at the University of Virginia. Tickets are on sale now for the event, which will feature a panel discussion from notable women in sports.

The label "Title IX" is shorthand for the section of the "Education Amendments of 1972," which states: "No person in the United States shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Hannah Catherine Munro, the coordinator of the event and director of development for the VHSL, said Title IX is the most important act ever passed to benefit women and girls in sports.

"Although the passage did not specifically mention athletics for girls, arguably, no other law has had a more positive impact on female involvement in high schools sports," she said.

Munro says that the VHSL sponsors 14 sports for girls, drawing more than 75,000 participants a year.

"The opportunities for today's athletes were built on the perseverance of those who came before. Whether you were a trailblazer in 1972 or helped carry and pass the torch, so many individuals played a part in creating and expanding opportunities for female athletes. I'm thrilled that we will be celebrating all of the accomplishments exactly 50 years to the day after Title IX was signed into law," she says.

The program will feature notable women in sports.

The panel discussion will include: Yogi Hightower Boothe, a two-time Olympian in Field Hockey and NCAA Championship Coach at Old Dominion and Vivian Greene, the first woman to receive an athletic scholarship to Norfolk State, along with Sam Brunelle, an incoming UVa women's basketball player.

There will be a greeting from UVa women's basketball coach Amaka Agugua-Hamilton,

Leading up to the event, the VHSL is gathering stories and pictures of women in sports throughout the commonwealth. They will be released on the VHSL social media channels weekly throughout the next month.

Tickets are required and can be purchased at <https://snwbl.it/LLhowL>