



Virginia Amateur Sports (VAS) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Roanoke. VAS is governed by a board of directors made up of 16 members from localities across the state. The VAS mission statement is to promote awareness and benefits of physical fitness and healthy lifestyles through sports education, training & competition. And the tagline is "Inspiring wellness & competition." VAS directs several events throughout the year, including the Virginia Commonwealth Games, the largest multi-sport festival held in Virginia each year.

How they got started

In 1989, the Governor's Commission on Sports & Physical Fitness passed an endorsement that VAS would serve as the state organization to hold the State Games of Virginia. In 1992, the Games were officially named the Commonwealth Games of Virginia. In 1990, the initial Games drew 4,400 athletes competing in 29 sports. More than 295,000 athletes, their families plus spectators have participated during the past 34 years.

Credentials

VAS is a member of the National Congress of State Games (NCSG) and is sanctioned and recognized by the NCSG, the Virginia High School League (VHSL), the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and by the United States Olympic Committee as a member of their USOC multi-sport organizational council.

Funding

In 1990, when the Games started, VAS had secured a \$175,000 grant from the state to launch the Games. By 2001, VAS lost all state funding. Despite the loss of state funding, VAS preserved and expanded its staff and programs. With zero funding from the state, local governments increased their financial support in addition to providing fields and facilities. VAS tries to keep the cost to participate in the Games minimal, with the majority of funding coming from sponsors. The Games have had four title sponsors in their history – Cor-East, Southern Health/Coventry, Subway and now Liberty University.

Support

With its dedication to a tradition of excellence & with a staff of four, VAS relies heavily on outside support. That support includes over 1,000 volunteers, 60+ volunteer sport coordinators, a volunteer local organizing committee made up of individuals from supporting localities, other business professionals, and volunteers from the medical profession field, security and police departments, and the VAS board of directors.

The Virginia Commonwealth Games at Liberty University

Going into its 35th year, the Virginia Commonwealth Games at Liberty University, is known throughout Virginia as Virginia's Olympics. This annual event is held in July (for most sports) and open to all ages and skill levels. From archery to wrestling, this event offers sports competition venues for over 30 different Olympic and Pan American sports.

The Games represent the true spirit of amateur athletics. For some, this celebration of sport is a stepping stone for following the dream of representing the United States in the Olympic Games. For others, the Games are a place to compete in a favorite pastime. Regardless of the age or skill of the athlete, the Games provide the pure pleasure of competing for the love of sport.

The Virginia Commonwealth Games at Liberty University are more than sports events; they go much deeper. The Games teach values such as teamwork and good sportsmanship, which are important components of everyday life. The Games encourage athletes to develop and improve their physical talent and competitive abilities. Lastly, the ideals of the Games promote physical fitness and encourage Virginians to adopt a healthy lifestyle, which includes exercise.

The Virginia Commonwealth Games has made it a mission to broaden its sport listing to include athletes who may have a physical and/or intellectual disability. It is important that all athletes feel included and are given the opportunity to not only win a medal, but to have an unforgettable experience while participating in a sport they enjoy. In 2024, the Virginia Commonwealth Games will be hosting the Able Games composed of 8 different events: rugby, baseball, bowling, fishing, soccer, wheelchair tennis, wheelchair basketball, and track & field. As excited as we are with the introduction of the Able Games, these 8 events will just scratch the surface. The goal is to add more opportunities each year for these amazing athletes. We look forward to the future of the Able Games!

