



#WeAreVSA

VSA Announces New 'Academy' Model and Structure for 2016/17

Innovating Player Centric Academy to develop next generation of VSA players

Haymarket (4/25/2016) Virginia Soccer Association (VSA) is proud to officially announce a new player centric development Academy structure that significantly increases and enhances developmental opportunities for players of all travel levels. The new Academy structure will provide an increased focus on the technical, tactical, physical, and psychological development which will model the top soccer Academies in the world.

VSA's new Academy model will see a restructuring of staff to create more oversight of day to day player and coaching operations on and off the field. The club will be tiered into three zones (Jr Academy U8-U10, Pre Academy U11-U14, Academy U15-U19) to help create a specialized player development pathway from one zone to the next. Each zone will have age specific programming, curriculums, and periodization to prepare them for the challenges of the next zone. The model will increase training time from 3 days to 4 days with the introduction of Club Concept Nights, Functional/Fitness Training, Futsal, and TF5ives that will fit into the clubs 10 month periodized macro cycle (See VSA Academy Documentation below).

"When we use the word Academy we are defining a mindset for our players in the truest sense of the word. The definition of Academy is 'a place of study or training in a specialized field', so we want our club structure to reflect this. Not only are we using the word to increase the learning model that we are creating at VSA but we are using good practices from some of the top clubs in the world to cement the best possible developmental environment in Northern Virginia." commented Matt Lacey, VSA Technical Director.

VSA will also introduce the very first Director of Player Education that will be tasked with implementing a year round life skills program for all ages to develop the psychological component of the game but more importantly life skills to create mentally stronger people to succeed in life. In the older Academy age groups the club will see a renewed focus on individual development with the introduction of Functional Training and along with a new and improved college preparation program. The U15-U19 Academy program will also introduce local pre-season trips to enhance team building opportunities including training, games, and local college visits. Finally within the clubs long term planning VSA's U14 Girls and U15 Boys will travel to Europe each year to provide players with the experience of a new culture on and off the field.

"I have been at VSA for 18 months and to see the strides we have made is tremendous. We are now seeing players and teams compete at the state, regional, and national level gaining respect from the soccer community. However, our goal remains focused on improving the learning environment with a big focus on character and hard work. We believe with this simple focus we will improve player performance which will in turn lead to greater returns for players and teams with the hope of meeting their long term goals and aspirations," continued Lacey.

The new Academy model that begins in August 2016 will create more leadership oversight, an increased focus on areas of discipline, increased hours of training time, and most importantly increased focus on the four key components of the game of soccer.

"When you take time to study the best Academies in the world you will see that they have a structure that focuses on all areas of development and the level of detail is really unmatched in much of America. What we hope to do is take one small step to making this a reality long term with the new positions and new initiatives that we have created for the 2016/2017 season."

VSA Academy Model Documentations:

[Club Curriculum Part 1](#) | [Club Curriculum Part 2](#) | [Meet Our Technical Staff](#) | [Tryout Schedule](#) | [Registration](#) | [Travel Brochures](#) |

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VSA is a non-profit 5013c Charitable Soccer Organization

