



## **How is Virginia A&M Prep Academy different?**

While the characteristics of many postgraduate schools or programs are the same, Virginia A&M Academy offers different: challenges for our student-athletes, highly qualified staff, small enrollment, and individual attention. But most of all, we offer an opportunity to make you more; to help you achieve your goals. This makes Virginia A&M Academy an excellent transition between high school and college!

### **College Retention**

The United States Department of Education reports that more than half of all male students who begin college never complete it! Most withdraw during their freshman year. Of those who do complete an associate or bachelor's degree, only 34 percent do so within four years; the average amount of time students spend earning these degrees is 6 years.

Prior to Virginia A&M Academy student-athletes have a retention rate of 75 percent, with an average completion rate of 4.5 years, once they enter college.

Virginia A&M, our goal is to help our students develop the academic and athletic skills, study skills, self-discipline, maturity, and self-confidence necessary to succeed in college or university environment, rather than just to survive it.

### **Postgraduate and Reclassifying Students**

Virginia A&M Academy Urban College Preparatory Academy whose student body is comprised of post-graduate students only; we are not a high school, nor are we a college, nor a small number of students enrolled in small classes to repeat their senior year.

Because our students are all postgraduates, we can emulate the college environment and experience yet provide some structure and support which colleges do not. Consequently, we offer a true transition year, not a repeat senior year of high school, or college classes, unlike many other prep schools.

### **Roster**

We only choose a small number are post-graduates and seniors seeking to reclassify. our roster is made up of between 45 and 50 student-athletes, and a limited number of September, they share the PG year, and progress from Orientation to

Commencement as a unit. No one is a newcomer entering a senior class in which friendships have been established and experiences have been shared during the past few years. Everyone must make new friends, learn to navigate the campus, and familiarize himself with the faculty and culture of the Academy.

United by a clear, similar purpose, and a shared commitment to our program necessary to achieve it, our students develop a strong camaraderie among themselves, and lifelong friendships are made. Positive peer pressure to achieve success in academics, athletics, extracurricular activities, and citizenship is widespread, and students help each other in all aspects of the program.

### **Combination of Structure, Support, and Independence**

Because all our students are now college-age, usually 17 years old or older, Virginia A&M Academy attempts to emulate the college environment and experience, as much as possible, yet providing some structure and support that colleges do not and will not provide. As a result, a year is a true transition year for students and will be of great benefit to our student-athletes.

Our rules and regulations are different from those at traditional post-graduate boarding schools. VAM offers more independence than students had in high school, requiring our students to take responsibility for themselves, just as they will have to do in college. Unlike college, however, we hold our students and parents accountable for their actions and decisions. Consequently, our students will leave Virginia A&M Academy with a maturity that they did not have upon arrival.

### **NCAA, NAIA, and NJCAA Eligibility**

First! You will NOT LOSS eligibility while attending Virginia A & M. Our student-athletes do not enroll in college courses. Therefore, their collegiate eligibility clock does not start.

Because VAM student-athletes are all post-grad student-athletes, our Gators Football team competes against college and university junior varsity teams, JUCO programs, as well as the best prep schools in our region. The benefits from this type of exposure and interaction, particularly with college coaching staff, are many for our student-athletes as they prepare for college competitions.

As a result, Bridgton Academy graduates may be found on many prestigious college rosters nationwide every year. Pursuing a postgraduate year at Bridgton Academy does not count against the NCAA eligibility requirement providing for five years in college to play four. Upon graduating from Bridgton Academy, our student-athletes have five years to play four in college.

## What set Virginia A&M apart from other Programs:

One of the biggest adjustments for new college students is “newfound freedoms”. College students have an increase in personal responsibility and a less external structure. There are no set study times, no required mealtimes, no one to tell them when to sleep or get them up, an increase in their academic workload, and a greater need to multi-task and balance new social opportunities and challenges. Below are the skills that you will master at VAM over the next year.

At Virginia A&M Academy, it's all about college readiness. Our focus is on our student-athletes developing the necessary skills to succeed once they arrive on campus. We call our program: **It's all you!**

**Time Management:** How to Prepare a weekly that includes class/studying, athletic training, work, meals, free time, and rest. Being a college student is like having a full-time job.

**Stress Management:** Regular exercise, adequate rest, good nutrition, prayer, and/or meditation are all ways of engaging in self-care that can reduce stress. Learning coping skills will help you as a student decrease the stressors that life is going through your way.

**Study Skills:** Even the best high school students don't always have good study skills. Knowing how to read a textbook, take notes in class, research information, or prepare for exams are all areas that will help you be successful in college.

**Critical Thinking:** College is big on critical thinking. No more memorizing the state capitals, now you will be expected to figure out problems by thinking through. At VAM you will learn critical thinking skills.

**Self-Management:** Preparing students to be responsible for personal needs, medical appointments, budgeting, meetings, and money management.

**Research Skills:** You can escape many things in college, but writing papers will not be one of them. At VAM you will learn Research Skills that will help you in all aspects.

**Communication Skills:** In college, you will encounter new advisors, professors, and staff members who will communicate with students in a variety of ways, so you need to be prepared to communicate in different ways with different people.

## Combination of Structure, Support, and Independence

Because all our student-athletes are of college age, usually 17 years old to 19, Virginia A&M Academy contends with the college environment and experience yet provides some structure and support that colleges do not and will not provide. As a result, a year with VAM is truly a transition year, not a repeat of a senior year in high school.

Because we are urban, commuter programs our rules and regulations are different from those at traditional boarding/post-grad schools, with VAM offering more independence than students may have at a high school. This requires our students to

take responsibility for themselves, just as they will have to do in college. Unlike college, however, we hold our students accountable for their actions and decisions. Consequently, when our students leave VAM Academy with a maturity that they did not have upon arrival.