



## **American Association of Adapted Sports Programs, Inc. (AAASP) Celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Born out of the 1996 Atlanta Paralympics, AAASP celebrates 25 years of providing young people with disabilities the opportunity to play competitive sports and live healthy active lifestyles!

**Atlanta, August 27 , 2021** – As the Paralympic Games kicked off this week in Tokyo, Japan, the American Association of Adapted Sports Programs, Inc. (AAASP) celebrates the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the American Association of Adapted Sports Programs (AAASP) bringing interscholastic wheelchair sports to students with physical disabilities. Born out of the 1996 Atlanta Olympic games, AAASP is looking back proudly at their efforts over the last 25 years in getting these students off the sidelines and into the game. Since its inception in 1996, over 5600 student-athletes from 2450 schools have participated in 1700 AAASP interscholastic wheelchair sports competitions. The AAASP cooperative approach with national, state, and local educational agencies, represents one of the most successful models for affording students with physical disabilities access to competitive sport.

AAASP moves into this next era with new leadership at the helm, promoting COO and Co-Founder, Tommie Storms, to new Executive Director. Storms replaces long time Executive Director and Co-Founder, Bev Vaughn, who is retiring September 1, 2021. “We are proud of the many milestones we have achieved in shaping the world of interscholastic wheelchair sports over the last 25 years,” said Storms. “We are excited about the future of interscholastic adapted sports, and look forward to continuing and expanding our commitment to help improve the health and well-being of students with physical disabilities through competitive school based sports.”

AAASP recently launched a new user-friendly website with improved navigation and functionality. Created in partnership with MLT Creative, this upgrade allows users to quickly and easily navigate the site to stay informed and up-to-date on the latest AAASP programs, news and information. Check it out at: [www.adaptedsports.org](http://www.adaptedsports.org).

AAASP, in conjunction with History Associates, is creating a digital timeline to celebrate AAASP’s 25th Anniversary and creating AAASP’s Commemorative Collection permanent archives. Athletes, coaches, supporters and others involved can submit their story to help tell the history of 25 years with Adapted Sports! The letters and photos in our archives from over the past 25 years, as well as those submitted this year, will be made into a commemorative piece for purchase later this year. Submit your story to [25@adaptedsports.org](mailto:25@adaptedsports.org) or visit <https://adaptedsports.org/25th-anniversary-commemorative-collection/> for more information.

As a part of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, AAASP launched an Alumni Association to support and engage a network of former AAASP student athletes as brand ambassadors and to help continue to transform lives and athletes.

In October, AAASP will virtually host its annual Adapted Sports Programs in Recreation and Education (ASPIRE) Awards ceremony. The ASPIRE Awards recognize and honor athletes, coaches, influencers and organizations for their outstanding contributions to support student athletes with physical disabilities. Nominees are being notified now, and more information about the awards program to follow. Visit: <http://adaptedsports.org/aspire-award/> for more information.

The American Association of Adapted Sports Programs (AAASP), headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia since 1996, has developed one of the nation’s most comprehensive school-based athletic programs for children with physical disabilities attending grades 1-12. Many prominent individuals and national organizations in the industry have recognized AAASP as the model for the nation. For more information about AAASP, please visit our website at [www.adaptedsports.org](http://www.adaptedsports.org) or join our conversations on Facebook (American Association of Adapted Sports Programs), Twitter or Instagram at: @AdaptedSports.

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