

The VMarlins

A group of young men in Danville, Virginia just wanted to play baseball. They wanted to participate in games, improve their skill level, maybe go and play for a college or a pro team. So a small little band of brothers stood up and went to work to make this dream a reality.

In the summer of 2008, Coach Frank Fulton and his family of five boys and one girl, kept their wife busy developing the grassroots of the VMarlins. It started off with a fall team for the high school guys who were not very good but wanted to get better. They formed a team called the Warriors and they practiced. They found other teams in the fall to play against who also needed to improve their game. Long before travel baseball was a thing in the region, this little band of brothers started a tradition unbeknown to them. In the following spring, that group of players had improve so much that their average team experienced its first trip to the state playoff games with them capturing the State runner up trophy.

The campaign was on and for the next few years the grassroot programs took on another form of collegiate competition with players who found out about the teaching and development program of the southside group. First came a player from Canada, then a player from Washington DC. Then a few more from North Carolina, New York, New Jersey, and Florida. A few more of the local players from the city and surrounding counties joined the original team of misfits also.

During all this activity in Virginia, one of the Fulton brothers was making his way professionally in the Florida Marlins organization. The skill sets and the protocols of development were impressive and complimentary to the program of the Virginia warriors. So Coach Fulton had an idea. Since he had started scouting with the Florida Marlins the first-year the Marlins began in 1997 and since the Florida Marlins were doing a great job creating gentleman warriors with respectful expectation then it would be appropriate to honor this process by creating the Virginia Marlins.



Quickly, the Virginia Marlins started making a name for their program. They would take the unsung/the unknown and go put them into battle to improve and play. It did not matter who, when, or where just go do battle. They would take high school sophomores and match them with collegiate juniors to take on competitive teams in North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, and Maryland. Naturally, these young ballers would improve, mature, and develop into leaders when they returned to their school teams and community programs. They even produced a few professional MLB/MILB players.



They already had the 83rd pick and the 104th pick of the 2003 come from their connecting process of development. However, in 2006 their best claim to the process was in their first-round pick of the draft for the Milwaukee Brewers, Jeremy Jeffress. In the next few years players went to the Baltimore Orioles, the Japanese Professional League, the Florida Marlins again. The New Independent Leagues were also taking on players from their rosters.

The most unique characteristic of the Virginia Marlins was found in their international composition. Coach Fulton was bringing players from other countries to the Danville, Virginia to join his players in development. They came from Germany, France, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Ireland, Belgium, Japan, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Canada, and Australia. It was the Australians that really turned the heads in 2017. 12 young ladies from Australia, lead by the first female Virginia Marlin, Oz Sailor, came to play men's baseball under Coach Fulton's Marlins. They played, they worked, they competed, and then they flew back to the Island.

In 2018, the Virginia Marlins had branched out to so many locations around the world that the name Virginia need to be revisited. The program was victorious in so many ways, it was virtuous in its mission, and it was virtual in connectivity. The Virginia Marlins had to adjust, Improvise, and Overcome into the new VMarlins.

Since 2017, the VMarlins have become known as the Global VMarlins. Running camps, clinics, and providing individual lessons to players and teams from all over the world. The VMarlins have recruited players for colleges, run baseball camps in Europe, developed summer teams for high school players, and have written educational manual for the future grasshoppers of the world.

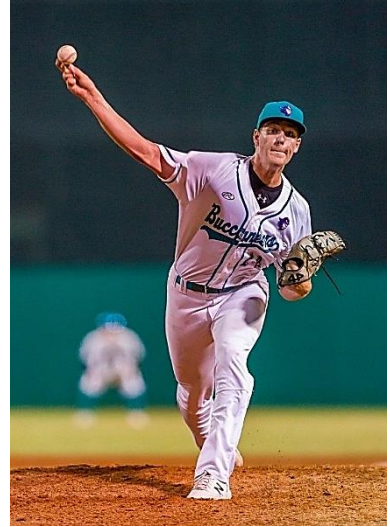


They also entered into another world of connectivity that brought all their noble efforts to full circle. During this transition phase of the VMarlins the term, “Warrior” was used over and over again, but misunderstood over and over again. One early morning, Coach Fulton open the book of an ancient Chinese Sensi. On the pages he read, “A Warrior sees life as Opportunity. The Ordinary sees life as a blessing or a curse.” In that instant, Coach realized how the VMarlins and the rest of the world could connect. Over all these years, creating life warriors, who adapt, improvise, overcome as they find the opportunities to play is what the program had been doing. For 42 years, Coach Fulton had been developing life warriors, just like he had developed in his early years. Therefore, to be a Life Warrior is to be a VMarlin. To be a member of those who respect self, respect others, and respect the process.

NOW!!!! The circle was complete and ready to get back to rolling. Rolling into a world that needed a group of Life Warriors to lead, bleed, and succeed. **NOW!!!!** The VMarlins could share and grow and bring other groups into the fold because as Coach Fulton quotes, “We all have the ability to be Life Warriors on a Global Scale”.



With this mindset in place, the VMarlins expanded and started the Native American National Baseball and Softball Federation in 2019. The VMarlins continued with their yearly baseball camp in Schwerin, Germany. The VMarlins placed collegiate grads into international competition and international players into College.



When they had to take the 2020 year off due to Covid 19 restrictions, the Life Warriors of the VMarlins wrote books and books on the secrets of the game and the secrets of life. In 2021 the VMarlins returned to battle in the AIO format of the NAW/VNUTS Appy Tour which put 30 new warriors into the most dynamic baseball tour of the Professional minor league parks of the Appalachian League within Tennessee, West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina.



The Future is waiting for the VMarlins and all its Program, Teams, Camps, and Lessons. The World is waiting for new warriors to lead the way and bring joy back to the planet. The VMarlins Global Brothers/Sisters are ready to Connect, Respect, Revive, and Go Play!