

Education

Building community around esports

George Mason University

With help from Lenovo, George Mason has elevated its esports varsity program, offering state of the art gaming technology, resources to produce high level collegiate tournaments, and gear that helps members stand out amongst their peers.



Lenovo

1

Who is George Mason University?

George Mason University is Virginia's largest public research university. Located in Fairfax, VA, near Washington, D.C., George Mason enrolls more than 40,000 students from 130 countries and all 50 states. George Mason has grown rapidly over the past half-century and is recognized for its innovation and entrepreneurship, remarkable diversity, and commitment to accessibility.



2

The Challenge

A core value at George Mason is that students come first—its top priority is to provide students with a transformational experience that helps them grow as individuals, scholars, and professionals.

The Office of Student Involvement creates a sense of belonging by providing memorable experiences for the Mason Community. The office manages student government, fraternity and sorority life, and more than 500 registered student organizations, hosting thousands of events each year. As Lauren Long, Executive Director of Student Involvement at George Mason, puts it: “We’re the fun on campus!”

A lively campus and vibrant student-led organizations play a crucial role in the student experience, boosting satisfaction, retention, and enrollment. That’s why, when a popular esports club on campus approached the Office of Student Involvement for support, the university was only too happy to get involved.

Lauren Long recalls: “The esports club really wanted to be able to compete at varsity level, which requires close affiliation with the university, direct financing, and support. I couldn’t say no to a bunch of students who were so passionate about being engaged on campus!”



“

Initially, the esports club just wanted help finding more space on campus to come together to play Super Smash Bros. As time went on, the popularity of the club just grew and grew. There was such huge demand from students that we knew we had to build out a formal esports program.”

Lauren Long

Executive Director of Student Involvement,
George Mason University

Launching an esports program

In 2018, the new varsity-level George Mason Esports was born. A departmental student organization within Student Involvement, George Mason Esports is a highly accomplished collegiate program in Northern Virginia, providing community for students interested in all levels of the esports experience.

“Lenovo has been our trusted esports advisor and partner since the early days,” says Chris Kumke, Assistant Director of Esports at George Mason. “We first reached out to Lenovo just about jersey sponsorship, and the response was incredible. They were so eager to get involved, learn more about our vision for esports, and help us to bring that vision to life.”

Services

Lenovo Esports Consultation
Lenovo Esports Event Service

Hardware

Lenovo Legion gaming towers
Lenovo Legion gaming monitors
Lenovo Legion gaming accessories,
including keyboard, mouse, and
mousepad

Bigger and better

Lauren Long adds: “Lenovo challenged us to think big, and their esports experts provided so much insight and support to help us grow our program. Lenovo not only provides top-of-the-line Legion gaming PCs for our existing esports space but is also helping us to design a brand-new esports arena. Lenovo also supports our annual GAMEmason event.”

GAMEmason is a multi-day gaming convention hosted at George Mason’s Fairfax campus, which features guest speakers from the gaming industry, educational sessions, esports tournaments, free arcade machines, tabletop and console gaming, an artist alley featuring work by George Mason students, and vendors and businesses from across the game industry. In Spring 2024, with the help of Lenovo, GAMEmason hosted the largest in-person collegiate esports event run by a university, bringing together 34 varsity-level collegiate esports teams from across the region to compete in tournaments including Rocket League, League of Legends, Overwatch 2, Valorant, Omega Strikers, and Super Smash Bros.

This year, George Mason took advantage of the Lenovo Esports Event Service to provide an end-to-end service. This included the delivery and setup of 80 Legion desktops, monitors, and accessories for the esports tournaments, as well as project management, on-site assistance, and disassembly at the end of event.



“

“The Lenovo Esports Event Service lifted a huge weight off our shoulders for GAMEmason. Lenovo took care of everything, from installation, networking, and configuration to troubleshooting during the tournaments. Packing up was made both organized and effortless by Lenovo.”

Chris Kumke

Assistant Director of Esports, George Mason University



3

Results

Today, George Mason Esports is one of the most popular student organizations on campus. There are currently 130 team players competing in seven games at the varsity. The George Mason Esports Discord has over 3,500 members, and the weekly Super Smash Bros. meetup that was first started by the gaming club now attracts more than 100 students every week.

GAMEmason Spring 2024 hosted the largest collegiate varsity esports LAN tournament organized by a U.S. university. GAMEmason Spring 2024 saw 34 teams come to Fairfax to compete to be the best in the nation.

Reflecting on the success of the George Mason Esports program, Lauren Long says: “We absolutely could not have made this happen without Lenovo.”



130 varsity team
players compete in
7 games



3,500+ Discord
members



34 teams competed at
GAMEmason 2024



“

George Mason Esports and GAMEmason connect students from across different disciplines, backgrounds, and interests. It's about bringing students together and helping them to find a sense of belonging on campus, so they get the most out of their university experience.”

Chris Kumke

Assistant Director of Esports, George Mason University

Why **Lenovo**?

“Since our very first engagement with Lenovo, the team has always encouraged us to dream big,” says Lauren Long. “It’s great fun to talk through things with the Lenovo team and bounce around ideas on how to grow the program and reach more students. We’re currently working on designs for a new esports arena and the Lenovo team is closely involved, providing valuable advice on everything from the system layout to the power requirements to the look and feel of the space. Having this level of expertise and support on board is a big bonus.”



How can esports help foster a sense of belonging on campus?

Uniting students with a passion for gaming through esports, supported by Lenovo.

[Explore Lenovo Esports Solutions](#)