



GREATNESS

THROUGH VIRTUE

ATHLETIC STRATEGIC PLAN

**“ The objective of any sport is to win.
But while the objective of the game is
to win, the purpose of the game is to
become what we were created to be. ”**

*– “Sport at the University of Mary: Fostering Excellence
in Keeping with Our Ideals”*





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Dear Friends,

A few years ago when the University of Mary embarked on “Vision 2030” - a comprehensive strategic planning initiative - the resulting discussions and dreams gave rise to a new, robust strategic plan. Then we came together and began to enact that plan, and it has been met with astonishing success!

It is deeply humbling to reflect on the progress we have made. The University of Mary is on the move, offering an “education for the whole of life,” and our growing campus reflects the vibrancy of a good plan in action.

One key component of “Vision 2030” centered on Marauders Athletics. The plan articulated that “the University of Mary has an opportunity in contemporary culture to bear authentic witness to the true purpose of sports: the cultivation of solid friendships and individual virtue.” While the bold, aspirational nature of this vision was clear, the specific tactics to execute the vision were yet to be formulated. As we advanced in other initiatives of Vision 2030, we recognized the need to consider further how to carry out our aspirations.

Since May of 2018, the University of Mary has been working through a robust strategic planning process specific to Marauders Athletics, describing how we hope to empower athletics to advance our mission in Christian, Catholic, and Benedictine higher education.

This plan also details how we can empower our student-athletes to compete well and with virtue, both in athletics and in life.

We are confident that this plan, with your support, will advance the Kingdom of God and offer great good to the culture of athletics even beyond our campus. We warmly invite you to join us in making our dreams a reality.

In Mary,

Monsignor James P. Shea President,
University of Mary

Since our arrival in the Dakota Territory in 1878, the Benedictine Sisters have been responding to the needs of the people in Bismarck and the surrounding region. The first Sisters came from St. Joseph, Minnesota, in response to the Church's call to teach the children of immigrants. Courageous Sisters boarded a train and rode west in response to a need, and that charism has remained.

When the Sisters founded Mary College in 1959, North Dakota's only Catholic college or university, we did so to respond to a need. The mission statement of Mary College—now the University of Mary—has remained nearly unchanged from that foundation: "The University of Mary exists to serve the religious, academic, and cultural needs of the people of this region." The only change was the addition of the words "and beyond" to the conclusion of the sentence.

When Mary College began intercollegiate athletics in 1970, we did so knowing that athletics at a Christian, Catholic, and Benedictine place of learning would be substantively different than other athletic programs. Student-athletes and coaches can so easily find themselves chasing idols such as glory, attention, and achievement, and our work was to demonstrate a better way.

After nearly 50 years, our impressive history now boasts legendary coaches such as Al Bortke, and hall of fame athletes in a host of sports. Yet always we have worked to achieve excellence that goes well beyond the court, track, field, mat, or pitch.

In today's culture, the University of Mary can do even more, to build upon our past efforts and to witness even more fully to the glory of sport and what is possible when athletics is done well. We hope to answer a need, to shine a light of hope brightly from upon this hilltop.

From the beginning, the Sisters have never done this alone, and so it is fitting that we invite you now to assist us as we strive to serve a need in this region and beyond.

Sister Nicole Kunze

Sister Nicole Kunze,
Prioress, Annunciation Monastery



Phillip Springsteen
Wrestling, NCAA All-American

Monsignor James P. Shea
President, University of Mary



Sister Nicole Kunze
Prioress, Annunciation Monastery

Cassie Askvig
Women's Basketball
NSIC Player of the Year
All-American

Throughout my career, I've had the honor of being thoroughly involved in collegiate athletics on a daily basis. As athletes and coaches will tell you, so many lessons are learned in the pursuit of athletic excellence – self-discipline, commitment to training, commitment to teammates, friendship, graciousness, humility, and respect. In sport, athletes discover within themselves strengths they never suspected they had; they learn that they can dig deeper, grow stronger.

As the Director of Collegiate Athletics at UMary, I am excited to lead the department in becoming the best athletic department that we can be; to dig deeper, and grow stronger as athletes, coaches and teams! We want to lead, and we want to win!

At the University of Mary, we are determined to build, not just athletic facilities and programs of the highest caliber, or athletes of extreme ability, but young adults devoted to the highest ethical standards of virtue. When student-athletes are treated as students first, we meet the challenge of forming them into lifelong achievers, who use the lessons of athletic training, competition, wins and losses, as a positive foundation for continued achievement in their lives.

The University of Mary's goal is athletics 'done right:' where athletes and athletics are not disconnected from academics and academia; where athletics are an integral part of making the higher education experience a full and complete one, a catalyst for school spirit through the thrill of competition, of striving and training, to hold up as an inspiration for the entire academic community.

Please join us in striving toward this tremendously important, ambitious, and achievable vision!

Dale Lennon
Director of Athletics

Women's Cross Country
Regional Champions enjoying
the taste of victory.



**“ Whatever it is that you do,
do it all for the glory of God.”**

— 1 Corinthians 10:31

THE NEED

The University of Mary's Strategic Plan, Vision 2030, presented a bold vision for the entire university. Unlike many strategic plans, Vision 2030 was not thrown on a shelf to gather dust. Rather, the entire community rallied around the plan and began the hard work of converting dreams into reality.

As the implementation of Vision 2030 progressed, the Commissioner of the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference—to which the University of Mary belongs—challenged the presidents of conference institutions to draft an athletic strategic plan intimately linked to their respective university's strategic plan.

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Being a Marauder is different, because we really are a family. Each person has a role in supporting the team, whether scoring points, cheering, helping with homework, or being a friend. Each person cares deeply about their performance and how they contribute to the overall team. We pick each other up and give praise for accomplishments. We are a dedicated, goofy, passionate, REAL team.

*Bree Erickson, 2x NCAA All-American,
Cross Country and Track & Field*

One aspect of the Vision 2030 plan dealt with ambitious dreams related to intercollegiate athletics. Specifically, the plan stated: “The University of Mary has an opportunity in contemporary culture to bear authentic witness to the true purpose of sports: the cultivation of solid friendships and individual virtue.”

The focus that Vision 2030 offered athletics was, in part, due to our recognition of some challenges on our campus. As more and more students came to Mary from all over the country seeking out our commitment to Catholic identity, we needed to focus anew on integrating our student body.

The geographic diversity on our campus had increased, and now we sought to support well *both* the devout Catholic student from New Hampshire, *and* a scholar-athlete from Nevada or Minot who might have little to no exposure to Christian faith. These two students, we knew, could learn from one another, provided that the environment was crafted to allow them to do so.

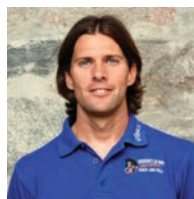
Additionally, as we looked upon the landscape of intercollegiate athletics and the broader sport culture, we recognized significant points of challenge. While sport can offer great good, it can also reveal and even intensify the brokenness of culture and individuals. This observation invited us to consider the question of sport quite carefully, and to recognize that we had an opportunity to respond to this need.

Yet this opportunity was not identified in a vacuum, as the Church has long recognized a need to ensure a proper perspective on sport, so that it is truly at the service of humanity.

“How can the Church not be interested in sport?”

– Pope Pius XII

Many recent Catholic and Christian voices, including Pope Pius XII, Pope Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis, have all commented on the importance of sport and its authentic purpose: the good of the human person. They have each noted that the prominence of sport in the culture has made it a “new areopagus,” a reference to Saint Paul’s preaching to the people of Athens in Acts 17. In other words, sport is a platform with tremendous potential for evangelization.



Our program has been successful over the years because of great student-athletes, great resources, and great vision by our athletic department and university as a whole. A clear direction with high expectations is important in striving towards excellence and attaining the highest possible outcome. The University of Mary sets itself apart by demanding more, providing the necessary tools, and creating a plan to achieve more than was thought possible.

Dennis Newell, Head Cross Country/ Track & Field Coach, who coached UMary to 21 NSIC championships as both head and assistant coach

No religious leader in recent times, has contributed more words to the topic than Pope Saint John Paul II, sometimes called the “sportsman pope.” Building upon the thoughts of his predecessors, and his own love of sport, this great saint compiled throughout his pontificate a vast collection of reflections on sport and its service to—and potential to harm—the human person.

Specifically, John Paul II identified that sport, ordered rightly, is a “training ground of virtue, a school of inner balance and outer control, an introduction to more true and lasting conquests” (“Sport as Training Ground for Virtue,” Dec. 20, 1979). Yet he also recognized the danger of sport when pursued for the wrong motives, or as “an end in itself.”

One author summarized the writing and thought of Pope John Paul II on sport in this way: “While the Church clearly recognizes the inherent value of sport, at the same time, the Church expresses concern for the true authenticity of sport. The Church is attentive to the possible deviations that contradict sport’s true purpose and, worse still, that harm the integrity of the person. Because of this, sport is also placed within the realm of human activities that are in need of salvation.”

“Sport needs a time of conversion.”

– Bishop Carlo Mazza



Cardinal Timothy Dolan receiving a Marauders men's baseball jersey upon his visit to Chesterton's Pub on the campus of the University of Mary.

“**The quality of a man's life is in direct proportion to his commitment to excellence, regardless of his chosen field of endeavor.**”

– Vince Lombardi

THIS IS OUR TIME

As the strategic plan Vision 2030 took shape, we found ourselves uniquely positioned to respond to this need in the culture of athletics. Because we participate in NCAA Division II athletics, have strong leadership, and a deep and abiding conviction in our Christian, Catholic, and Benedictine mission and identity, the University of Mary has a chance to address this challenge in a way others simply cannot.

When the time came to address this need, the university engaged in a strategic planning process specific to athletics. This time of deep reflection proved critical for self-examination and for bold ambitions. And the result is fundamentally different from the strategic plans most intercollegiate athletic departments produce. At the University of Mary, we are striving to meet an identified need in the culture in and through athletics.



“ We—the rest of the country, the rest of the world—are watching you, because you represent something fresh and daring. ”

– Cardinal Timothy Dolan, while on his visit to the University of Mary campus

THE PROCESS

The initial groundwork for the strategic planning process occurred in the summer of 2017, when the entire athletic department joined Monsignor Shea on a three-day “formation seminar,” in Pierre, South Dakota. This time of reflection encouraged the discussion of the purpose of sport, both broadly and at the University of Mary, and was met with enthusiastic investment from the coaches and staff.

In response to requests within the athletic department, the discussion continued through a series of intentional culture conversations, forming an aligned understanding of our current state as perceived in individual and collective habits, character, culture, and leadership.

These conversations led to refined discussions involving many stakeholders—including trustees, coaches, student-athletes, staff members, administrators, and faculty members—surrounding “strategic intent,” or a clear and vibrant vision around the desired future state of athletics at the university. Once our stakeholders achieved consensus on the end goal, we set about the task of defining how we would attain it. Committees were formed representing a broad spectrum of stakeholders, and these committees worked to define a plan to achieve our vision.

The resulting plan, then, is convinced of its goal and clear in the steps needed to achieve the vision. The plan is also agile, acknowledging that our progress may reveal that the sequencing of our tactical campaign might need adjusting, and that we might need to add or eliminate strategies to achieve the end. While the tactics used to attain the goal are flexible, the goal itself is not; we know where we’re going, and we’re all on board.

Thus, the goal of the athletic strategic planning process is not simply to keep pace with competitors, nor is it to simply develop a wish list of facilities and resources. Rather, the goal is to consider deeply how athletics at the University of Mary might make a unique contribution, through **distinction, service, and relationships** – to the community and to the whole of intercollegiate athletics.

“Where there is no vision
the people perish.”

— Proverbs 29:18

Athletics at the University of Mary isn't simply a separate activity, operating aside from the rest of the educational experience. Rather, athletics at the University of Mary represents a unique opportunity where our call to **distinction, service, and relationships** can be on full display.

The goal of athletics at the University of Mary is meant to provide **distinction** within the landscape of intercollegiate athletics. We intend to order athletics rightly and, in so doing, better serve our scholar-athletes. And so, we established a **Center for Distinction** in our athletic department. In witnessing to a better approach, we will offer **service** to our community and to the rest of the sporting world by

Our Vision: “If played as they should be, sports become... an ideal context for practicing many virtues.”

— Pope St. John Paul II, “Address to the Roma Sports Association,” Nov. 30, 2000

We believe that scholar-athletes possess an inherent gift—a burning passion to achieve greatness—which should be celebrated and channeled to help them achieve a prize that endures. A competitive spirit is a gift, and we want to support our scholar-athletes as they strive to compete to the limits of their abilities. Yet we also assert that while the *objective* of sport is to win, the *purpose* of sport is to shape us into the people that God created us to be. Without diminishing our desire to win, we aspire to maintain our focus on the purpose of sport, for the better service of our scholar-athletes.

THE VISION

teaching any and all who are eager to engage in this important work alongside us. And finally, we will remain committed to **relationships**, both in the work of building a better approach to the practice of sport, and in partnering with others to carry out this bold vision.

When properly ordered, the athletic experience has the potential to fortify scholar-athletes with the skills they need to flourish in life and for life. Thus, our aspirations for athletics are far greater than simply to achieve competitive excellence.

Thus, our vision statement is:

“To be the preeminent
intercollegiate athletic
department for developing
the greatness within each
human person through
the practice of virtue and
the formation of authentic
friendships.”

We recognize that the vision we have set for ourselves is countercultural. Yet having considered many alternatives and variations, we are confident we have discerned the right vision for athletics. This is our time to address a pressing need in our culture.





In the Samaritan's Feet outreach program, our Marauders athletes show servant leadership from the heart when they meet children in need, wash their feet, and fit them for brand-new shoes.

OUR MISSION

How will we realize our bold vision? We will focus day-to-day on creating the individual and collective habits needed to create a foundational culture.

We believe that the people are the program, and that there is no substitute for invested people who are themselves striving for virtue. Facilities, monetary resources, and talent are necessary. But mostly it's people who shape the culture that defines our daily experience and secures our success. Therefore the mission for the University of Mary athletics department is to:

“ **Create a department-wide culture committed to individual and collective greatness through Virtuous Leadership.** ”

Our Motto: Our Virtuous Leadership approach forms the cornerstone and represents the distinguishing aspect of the scholar-athlete experience at the University of Mary. We believe that greatness comes through virtue, and therefore character and virtue development is not simply a nice feature of our approach. It is the foundation. Therefore our motto reads: **Greatness through Virtue.**

GREATNESS

— THROUGH VIRTUE —

Our scholar-athletes at Mary will be emboldened to pursue greatness, and so they will not settle merely for competitive success. They will realize that to aspire simply to a championship is not to set a goal too high, but far too low, and that authentic greatness pursues much more.

And as our scholar-athletes unite to pursue virtue, they will find that authentic friendship arises out of the shared pursuit of something noble and good. Strong community in our programs will develop from shared purpose, and the result will be friendships that will last a lifetime.

“The world promises you comfort, but you were not made for comfort; you were made for greatness.” – *Pope Benedict XVI*

Our Promise: Our promise is that in and through the athletic experience, our scholar-athletes will be prepared to achieve greatness through virtue in life and for a lifetime. Fortified in mind, body, and soul, we believe they will be prepared for whatever life throws their way, no matter whether prosperity or adversity. Our mission-first, virtue-first approach is designed intentionally to ensure that throughout a lifetime, our scholar-athletes will say they were prepared for life because of, and not in spite of, their athletic experience. Therefore, our athletics brand promise is:

**“Greatness through virtue
— for life!”**

As a famous sports quote puts it: “Sports don’t develop character, they reveal it.” At the University of Mary,—when done rightly—sports **both develop and reveal character.**

THE VIRTUES:

“Virtue means the best a person can be...” – *Saint Thomas Aquinas*

The virtues themselves are at the core of the athletic experience, and there are many that could be useful for scholar-athletes. In keeping with the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, the University of Mary has chosen to focus on six virtues: the four “Cardinal Virtues” of prudence, justice, courage, and temperance; paired with two virtues worthy of particular note as they pertain to sport: magnanimity and humility.

These six virtues will form the backbone of our work with scholar-athletes, informing all that we do and aspire to be:

Magnanimity (Great-hearted): Striving for greatness.

Humility (Self-forgetful): Acknowledging one’s proper place and limitations.

Prudence (Wise): Sound reason and judgment.

Courage (Gritty): Strength in the face of adversity.

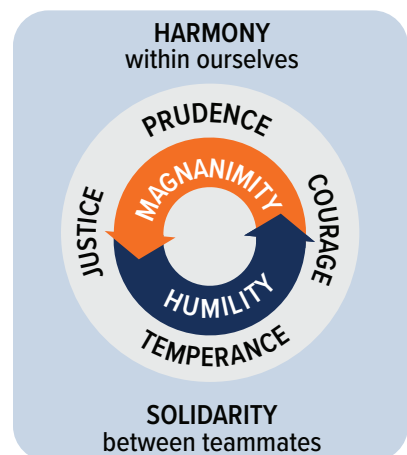
Justice (Respectful): Fairness in giving all their due.

Temperance (Self-mastered): Mastery and moderation of natural desires and passions.

Additionally, we recognize that the signs of these virtues—and thus the signs of greatness that will demonstrate our progress—will be solidarity and harmony. These reveal an integrated individual and communal living.

Solidarity: A community unified by beliefs, actions, and a common goal.

Harmony: Psychological unity and balance.





*Devin Douglas State Farm National
NCAA Slam Dunk Champion.*

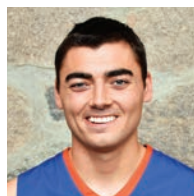
The Strategic Plan ultimately focused on five essential elements of the scholar-athlete experience at Mary. The following five essential areas taken together will serve as the blueprint for athletics at the University of Mary:

1. Virtuous Leadership and Whole-Person Development
2. Virtue-Based Approach to Academic Excellence
3. Virtue-Based Approach to Athletic Excellence
4. Virtue-Based Approach to Scholar-Athlete Safety, Health and Well-Being
5. Virtue-Based Approach to Community Integration and Connectedness.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Committee deliberations centered on the vision and virtues of the University of Mary so as to ensure that the vision and virtues were at the center of the planning process, and never simply a separate thing. For each essential element, planning participants considered the particular ways that our virtues were both needed for and developed from the particular element. For each element a Golden Mean Continuum was established to reflect the excesses and deficiencies we seek to avoid, and the optimal “Golden Mean” that we aspire to achieve.

The word “optimal,” then, does not indicate the most extravagant and elaborate dreams that we can conceive.



Playing for and going to school at the University of Mary was special. My coaches and teammates, faculty and staff were truly amazing. I was

fortunate to be a scholar-athlete, achieving my degree in civil engineering and becoming the first student to go through the new engineering program at the University of Mary. I could not have picked a better school. I’m happy I made the decision to go there.

Michael Gorder, Men’s Basketball, Marauders Academic Senior Student-Athlete of the Year

Rather, optimal means the golden mean given a particular element of the scholar-athlete experience, striking the prudent place between deficient and excessive.

For example, while we want our scholar-athletes to receive adequate academic support during their time at Mary, ensuring that their unique needs and schedules are accommodated, we also do not want to coddle them such that they are not prepared to flourish in life. Thus, our committee conversations focused on identifying optimal academic resources to support our athletes.

In addition to the five committees formed around each of the five essential areas, one additional committee was created to focus exclusively on the virtue theory itself and its measurement. Key performance indicators (for scholar-athletes) and practices (for coaches) translated the vision and virtues into outcomes capable of contributing to continuous improvement and benchmarking growth in the short and long term.



DEFICIENT

TOO LITTLE
Detracts/Prevents
Vision Realization

OPTIMAL

Ideal for the Vision
Objectives

EXCESSIVE

TOO MUCH
Detracts/Prevents
Vision Realization



At UMary I was able to get a great education while competing at a high level athletically. The professors and coaches were always willing to help me with whatever I needed, which made balancing schoolwork and competition less stressful.

Tate Barnhardt, All-American Wrestler

VIRTUOUS LEADERSHIP

and Whole Person Development

“Become what you are.”

– Alexandre Havard, *Virtuous Leadership*

At the University of Mary, we believe that scholar-athletes are made for the greatness that God has in mind uniquely for them, and that the pathway to achieving that potential comes through the development of virtue. This pathway to greatness includes refining their **desire** for such greatness.

Properly conceived, every aspect of the scholar-athlete experience should develop virtue—human excellence—and not merely some lesser end. Sport is meant for more than the pursuit of worldly greatness; rather, it should be a training ground that prepares scholar-athletes to approach each pursuit in their lives as an opportunity **to become the best version of themselves.**

Our vision is that virtue is promoted and intentionally developed to create a virtue-based experience that pervades every aspect of the scholar-athlete formation, one where the virtues are seen as essential and necessary to achieve personal and collective greatness.

We will intentionally work with our coaches, staff, and scholar-athletes and help them achieve fluency in the language and concepts of virtue. Our coaches will anchor the best of their coaching philosophy in the tradition and truth of virtue. We dream of the day when coaching uses the vocabulary of virtue, when a post-game interview finds a coach discussing the areas where her team exemplified virtue, and when a scholar-athlete graduates from Mary and wins a job because he clearly articulates how he developed in virtue because of his time playing and studying at Mary.

CORE STRATEGIES:

1. **Virtue and Culture**

Development: Design and deliver specialized virtue and culture development for coaches and scholar-athlete “mentors” dedicated to supporting scholar-athletes and teams.

2. **Master Facilities Plan:**

Ensure that a master facilities plan for athletics incorporates thoughtful consideration for the visual and physical environment needed to support virtue development, research and outreach.

3. **Coaching Staff:**

Develop refined processes for recruiting and supporting coaches with the capacity and commitment to virtue-first human development.

4. **Recruiting:**

Develop and refine best-practice processes for recruiting scholar-athletes with the capacity and commitment to virtue-first human development.

5. **Assessment:**

Create a comprehensive assessment approach for virtue and culture development in individuals and teams, benchmarking impact, ensuring integration across the scholar-athlete experience, and supporting continuous improvement.

6. **Institute of Virtue-Based**

Athletics: Establish an Institute for Virtue-Based Athletics as a Center of Excellence to support the theory and practice at the University of Mary and beyond.



“

We believe that education and formation for the whole of life can be done in athletics. In fact, we maintain that athletics is a prime place for the intense formation of human beings to become truly great, because we always come to greatness through virtue.

Father Craig Vasek, Chaplain of Marauders Athletics

Father Craig Vasek serves as the University of Mary chaplain dedicated specifically to athletics. Along with the basketball coaches, Fr. Vasek is barefoot for a game in support of the Samaritan's Feet outreach, which provides shoes for children in need.



We learn the Benedictine values in the classroom and live them daily on the women's soccer field. I am forever grateful for my time as a student-athlete at the University of Mary. The memories, lessons and experiences are forever instilled in me.

Sarah Cook, Women's Soccer Head Coach, UMary Hall of Fame, and All-American

Virtue-Based Approach to **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**


As scholar-athletes pursue greatness, they must embrace that pursuit in all parts of their identity, including their academic studies. Scholar-athletes must manage several competing elements in their schedules, including many activities that another student might not need to balance. As a result, scholar-athletes require particular attention and support to allow for an optimal experience.

We desire a scholar-athlete experience that is defined by strong and healthy mentoring relationships with professors and staff, one with flexible scheduling that allows scholar-athletes to take any major without sacrificing academic success, with academic services that support learning and instill confidence, supported by travel accommodations that allow for meaningful educational engagement during travel. Our vision is to provide all scholar-athletes with academic enhancement opportunities—such as Year-Round Campus, internships, and global study—that align with and allow for competitive excellence.

Through these strategies, we will allow our scholar-athletes to flourish in the academic pursuits, taking advantage of all that Mary has to offer, while also benefiting from all that athletic competition has to offer their formation.

CORE STRATEGIES:

- 1. Academic Services:** Audit best practices and create coordinated support and advocacy across campus for scholar-athlete success. This includes a plan for flexible academic and student-services (including technology) needed to maximize academic success.
- 2. Virtue-Based Programming:** Design and deliver differentiated virtue-based programming for teams and individuals centered on virtue-based indicators.
- 3. Virtue-Based Environment:** Create an environment of high expectations in the pursuit of academic excellence and career preparation through teaching, advocating, modeling, and celebrating scholar-athlete formation and success.
- 4. Academic Support:** Review and improve academic support of athletic participation, including course offerings, timing/scheduling of classes, tutoring, and academic advising.
- 5. Staffing:** Ensure the staffing and support needed to ensure the academic success of scholar-athletes.



“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”

– Plutarch



Over half of Marauders scholar-athletes carry a grade point average of 3.25 while one-third are at 3.50 or above.

Virtue-Based Approach to **ATHLETIC EXCELLENCE**

Critical to the university's approach to athletics is the desire for competitive excellence. Our virtue-first approach must not be understood as dampening our desire for victory. Our goal is to ensure that scholar-athletes are supported in the quest for their personal and collective best. As we pursue competitive excellence, we will always strive to keep the *objective* of sport (winning the contest) subservient to its *purpose* (assisting our scholar-athletes to become who they were made to be).

In order to achieve competitive excellence, we will need resources such as facilities, talented coaches and staff, and scholarships. Thus, we will strive for "optimal" allocation of resources, including beautiful facilities that are not extravagant, but are meticulously maintained. We will ensure that all teams have sufficient scholarship support to field a competitive team, and that scholar-athletes have the resources they need to compete well.

Additionally, it will take courage and prudence to live counterculturally, for the culture of athletics often operates from a *spirit of scarcity*, looking with envy at the resources of a competitor and responding with resentment. Rather, we will strive for a genuine *spirit of abundance*, gratefully acknowledging the sacrifices, bounty and blessings we have received and responding with gratitude.

CORE STRATEGIES:

Coaching Staff: Create a model for a mission-aligned coaching evaluation that assesses the development of greatness in each scholar-athlete through the practice of virtue.

- 1. Recruiting:** Improve the scholar-athlete recruitment process to ensure that incoming scholar-athletes are educated about the University of Mary virtue-first experience with the emphasis on intellectual, athletic, moral, and spiritual development.
- 2. Athletic Development:** Create the optimal strength, conditioning and rehabilitation program. This includes quality staffing and state-of-the-art training resources to assist in the development of each scholar-athlete's potential for greatness.
- 3. Facilities Master Plan:** Create a short- and long-term Facilities Master Plan to establish optimal practice and game facilities to enhance competitive excellence, community pride, and virtue development.
- 4. Athletic Marketing and Promotions:** Develop an integrated marketing and promotion strategy for a virtue-first identity, featuring stories of virtue and culture of our coaches, scholar-athletes, and teams. The strategy should enhance scholar-athlete recruitment, improve brand recognition, and assist in athletic fundraising.
- 5. Assessment:** Create a comprehensive assessment approach for virtue-first athletic excellence that assists coaches, administrators, and players in benchmarking culture and supporting continuous improvement.
- 6. Resource Plan:** Develop a process for establishing differentiated short- and long-term "optimal" resources plans for each athletic program, acknowledging the uniqueness of each sport.

On our annual Day of Service, the campus empties when all students go out into the community to volunteer on service projects, living out the Mary spirit of servant leadership.

“ It is Christian to want to win. ”

— Monsignor Thomas J. Richter



“



Through my experience as a scholar-athlete at the University of Mary, I was given the tools needed to be successful in life after athletics. Learning the values of community, hospitality, and service has allowed me to get where I am today. Our time is now at the University of Mary as we develop the whole person spiritually, academically, and athletically to prepare future leaders — **for life.**

Craig Bagnell, Head Football Coach, former Marauders quarterback and career leader in touchdown passes and passing yards

FACILITIES EXPANSION

“We must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time.”

— Dorothy Day

The facilities envisioned in this plan serve not merely the winning of championships, but also the formation of character and the building of community. The desire for a new football stadium on campus includes plans for scholar-athlete academic support and additional classroom space for the entire university community. Artificial turf surfaces and an Air Dome in the winter allow our teams to practice and all of our students a place for recreation in the colder months. And hosting our competitions on-campus makes athletics even more a place for the student body and alumni and the local community to rally around our athletics program and experience true Benedictine hospitality.

FACILITIES:

Athletic Campus including:

- Outdoor Practice Field and Track
- Gameday Field
- Stadium and Multi-Purpose Space
- Baseball and Softball Field
- Locker Room Clubhouse
- Gameday Plaza
- Air Dome over Field Turf
- Equipment Storage Facility
- Portable Courts (Tennis, Basketball)



Our new sports facilities will welcome teams from our conference (NSIC), as we compete against one another and within ourselves in the pursuit of excellence and outstanding performance, demonstrating the virtues of courage, determination and sportsmanship.







Marauders athletes connect with kids through coaching youth, mentorships and community service, Special Olympics, Wheels in Motion and more.



UMary has given me the opportunity to play the sport I love while also allowing me to excel academically. The people I have met while doing both will be in my life forever.

Morgan Schnabel, member of the NSIC All-Academic Team

Virtue-Based Approach to **SCHOLAR-ATHLETE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELL-BEING**

As a community, the University of Mary is committed to providing the optimal level of care and support for all of our students, including our scholar-athletes. Our scholar-athletes have unique needs, as their quest to represent Mary well in their athletic pursuits comes with risk to mind, body, and soul. We'll seek directly and productively to confront and address the need for safety and well-being for each scholar-athlete.

The athletic experience is meant to be fortifying for life, and yet we recognize examples where student-athletes find themselves broken for life, which may include physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of their human development. Determining the right amount of training and rest, the right amount of striving and acceptance—these are prudential judgments that require thoughtful discernment in community.

CORE STRATEGIES:

- 1. Resource Plan:** Create a resources plan that includes human, material, and facility resources needed for the support of mind, body, and soul, possibly including: chaplain(s), sports psychologist(s), counselor(s), nutritionist(s), etc.
- 2. Health and Safety:** Audit and establish optimal levels of health and the safety of all equipment, training and sports medicine spaces, locker rooms, and practice and game facilities. Create a plan to maintain and/or improve our practice facilities and to maintain new facilities as they come online, through a combination of full-time staff and innovative student staffing options.
- 3. Team Travel:** Create a plan for optimal team travel conditions, which allows for competitive success, support of academics, and the promotion of overall health and well-being.
- 4. Health Services:** Conduct an audit of current physical, mental, and emotional data to establish baseline and benchmark data for targeted delivery of programs and services.
- 5. Health Programming:** Organize and/or create differentiated programming that meets the universal, targeted, and intensive needs of all teams and scholar-athletes.
- 6. Housing:** Review scholar-athlete housing options and patterns of behavior to ensure that all housing arrangements support overall goals for health and safety.



Luxon Glor celebrates with teammates after being crowned champion of the NSIC indoor long jump. The group captured four of eight podium spots, contributing to the men's team's runner-up finish. Meanwhile, Glor claimed three total championships on his way to earning High-Point Performer of the meet.

“**Friendships born on the field of athletic strife are the real gold of competition.**”

— Jesse Owens

Virtue-Based Approach to **COMMUNITY INTEGRATION AND CONNECTEDNESS**

At the University of Mary, we believe that authentic friendships result from a shared pursuit of what is good. Our scholar-athletes have the opportunity, then, to transcend friendships rooted only in utility or enjoyment to a shared striving for human excellence in virtue.

Naturally, this type of friendship can more easily translate outside of a particular athletic team, and even the athletic department. Once scholar-athletes recognize that the reason for their deepest friendships are not merely due to a shared interest, but rather due to a shared striving after goodness, opportunities open for meaningful relationships throughout the entire university.

Our efforts at Mary will be toward integration and connection, allowing our scholar-athletes the opportunity to shape and engage our campus community, while also allowing themselves to be shaped by those they encounter. We will foster positive human interactions that allow diverse groups of students to encounter one another.

CORE STRATEGIES:

- 1. Formation:** Create and deliver intentional and authentic virtue, faith, and leadership formation around spiritual development, religious literacy, interfaith understanding, and community development.
- 2. Leadership:** Utilize existing campus leaders and programmatic offerings to create opportunities for integration and connectedness between athletics and the campus community around growth in virtue and the pursuit of truth.
- 3. Student Life:** Collaborate with Student Life regarding housing and residence life options to ensure maximum promotion of community and integration.
- 4. Integration:** Intentionally recruit for integration by seeking individuals who recognize the fullness of the University of Mary experience, not just the athletic experience.
- 5. Connectedness:** Cultivate common experiences for all scholar-athletes to promote connectedness within athletic department.
- 6. Facilities:** Create a comprehensive facilities plan that fosters optimal community integration and connectedness.
- 7. Fan Experience:** Develop a department-wide philosophy and goals for an educational, motivational, and transformational UMary fan experience.
- 8. Faculty and Staff Support:** Facilitate faculty/staff support for scholar-athletes and teams, and athletics support for academic departments and other campus groups.

TIMELINE: FUNDRAISING NEED

In order to effect a truly transformational change in intercollegiate athletics, the University of Mary will need the support of generous friends and benefactors. Due to our commitment to offering *affordable* Christian, Catholic, and Benedictine education, we do not have excess revenue to pour into this effort. We will continue to invest in our student experience and to fund all university functions for success. Yet this effort will require support beyond our means.

In order to fulfill our vision, Mary will need to raise funds both to ensure the staffing and support for the initiatives, as well as the infrastructure needed to witness and to teach.

The total financial need to implement the “Greatness Through Virtue” Strategic Plan is \$37.8 million.



2019 through 2030: Initiatives are in the order of priority and required needs.

Virtue-First Formation

Resource Audit

Creating and Achieving “Optimal” Plan by Program

Develop Assessments

Academic Support and Integration

Merit-Based Pay Guided to Mission

Integrated Marketing and Promotion

Athletic Master Facilities and

Campus Integration Plan:

- Practice Field & Track
- Gameday Field
- Stadium & Multi-Purpose Space
- Baseball & Softball Complex
- Gameday Plaza

- Air Dome over Field Turf
- Equipment Storage Facility
- Portable Courts (Tennis, Basketball)

Athletic Endowment to Support Facilities

Educate through Fan Experience

Human/Career Formation

Institute for Faith, Virtue, and Sport

As a part of this campaign, the Marauders Athletics department needs to build up to, and consistently achieve, a \$1 million annual giving expectation through the Marauders Armada. These funds will support scholar-athlete scholarships to ensure that all scholar-athletes, regardless of their financial background, have the capacity for a life-changing experience in NCAA Division II intercollegiate athletics.





WITH GRATITUDE

“To give anything less than your best is to sacrifice the gift.” —*Steve Prefontaine*

The University of Mary is richly blessed in talented faculty, staff, coaches, scholar-athletes, students, friends, benefactors, trustees, and more. Many came together to discuss and envision the future of Marauders Athletics. We are grateful to all who contributed to the formulation of this vision, and we look forward to extending the invitation to others who are eager to assist us in this effort.

STEERING/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Monsignor James Shea, President
Greg Vetter, Executive Vice President
and Chief of Staff

Jerome Richter, Vice President for Public Affairs
Dale Lennon, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics
Dr. Ann Brodeur, Faculty Athletic Representative
Dr. Diane Fladeland, Vice President
for Academic Affairs

Mike Silbernagel, Head Strength and
Conditioning Coach
Sarah Cook, Head Women’s Soccer Coach/
Senior Women’s Administrator
Kevin Becker, Director of Athletic Development
Dr. Tim Seaworth, Vice President for Student Life
Michael McMahon, Vice President for
Enrollment Management

VIRTUOUS LEADERSHIP AND WHOLE-PERSON DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Ann Brodeur, Chair, Faculty Athletic
Representative
Dale Lennon, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics
Roger Ternes, Major Gifts Officer
Myron Schulz, Assistant Professor,
Gary Tharaldson School of Business
Lance Schuler, Athletic Trainer
Adam Aho, Head Wrestling Coach
Abby Pollart, Assistant Volleyball Coach
Mark Martin, Assistant Football Coach
Dominic Tudor, Male Student-Athlete
Father Jarad Wolf, Priest of Bismarck and
Former Marauders Football Player

VIRTUE THEORY AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND PRACTICES

Dr. Scott Cleveland, Co-Chair, Director of the Catholic Studies Program
Dr. David Echelbarger, Co-Chair, Associate Professor, School of Arts and Sciences
Dale Lennon, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics
Dr. Gary Watts, UMary Trustee, Academic Dean Emeritus of the University of Jamestown
Dennis Newell, Head Track and Field and Cross Country Coach
Joe Kittell, Head Men's Basketball Coach
Brett Holinka, Assistant Football Coach
Dave Cook, Head Men's Soccer Coach
Matthew Lewellen, Assistant Wrestling Coach
Allan McCallum, Head Swimming and Diving Coach
Mary Williamson, Female Student-Athlete

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Dr. Diane Fladeland, Chair, Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dale Lennon, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics
Dr. Rod Jonas, Dean, Liffrig Family School of Education and Behavioral Sciences
Lucas Oerter, Assistant Athletic Director, Compliance
Korie Tetzlaff, Head Volleyball Coach
Mark Moriarty, Head Baseball Coach
Jordan Noskowiak, Assistant Football Coach
Jackson Grad, Male Student-Athlete
Derek Myers, Male Student-Athlete

ATHLETIC EXCELLENCE

Michael McMahon, Chair, Vice President for Enrollment Management
Dale Lennon, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics
Greg Vetter, Executive Vice President and Chief of Staff
Dan Huntley, Associate Athletic Director, Head Hockey Coach
Danielle Radosa, Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach, SAAC Advisor
Craig Bagnell, Head Football Coach
David Tamiseia, Associate Professor and Administrative Chair, School of Arts and Sciences
Adam Jacobson, Assistant Women's Basketball Coach
Matt Splon, Assistant Football Coach
Morgan Schnabel, Female Student-Athlete

SCHOLAR-ATHLETE SAFETY, HEALTH, AND WELL-BEING

Mike Silbernagel, Chair, Head Strength and Conditioning Coach
Dale Lennon, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics
Brian Larson, Sports Information Director
Stephanie Roan, Head Softball Coach
Dr. Mary Dockter, Chair of Physical Therapy, School of Health Sciences
Rhonda Olson, Head Athletic Trainer
Mike Annese, Assistant Men's Basketball Coach
Wayne Norman, Equipment Manager
Vida Saliendra, Head Tennis Coach
Luisa Garcia, Female Student-Athlete

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION AND CONNECTEDNESS

Kevin Becker, Chair, Director of Athletic Development
Dale Lennon, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics
Sarah Cook, Head Women's Soccer Coach/Senior Women's Administrator
Dr. Mike Taylor, Associate Professor, Liffrig Family School of Education and Behavioral Sciences
Rick Neumann, Head Women's Basketball Coach
Tristian Johnson, Assistant Football Coach
Reece Vega, Assistant Track and Field Coach
Matthew Kreklow, Male Student-Athlete
Brieann Backes, Female Student-Athlete

Special thanks to Dr. Matt Davidson and the Institute for Excellence and Ethics for their assistance throughout the strategic planning process.



One thing that separates us from the rest of the league is the level of support from the University of Mary administration and the Athletic Department. It is amazing to see President Monsignor Shea and Athletic Director Dale Lennon, who has not missed a home wrestling match since becoming AD, at our home duals. This simply does not happen at any other university, especially for the sport of wrestling. That is how I know I am at the right institution doing what I love.

Adam Aho, Head Wrestling Coach, Northern Sun Coach of the Year



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