

## **UIWRSO Provides Unique Vision Service and Keeps Cardinals Athletes' Eyes on the Ball**

**by Kim O'Sullivan - Thursday, June 07, 2018**

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Student athletes at the University of the Incarnate Word (UIW) are reaping the benefits of a new vision service program provided to them by the UIW Rosenberg School of Optometry (UIWRSO). The newly completed Sports and Vision Enhancement Service at UIW initially opened in August 2017 by UIWRSO to identify and remediate visual problems that can impact athletes' performance. UIW is the only university in the country with Division I athletics that has a Sports Vision Service run at this level by its School of Optometry. The Service uses state-of-the-art sports vision and training instruments making the Sports and Vision Enhancement Service a standout among other similar initiatives.

"Faculty involved in this service were themselves varsity athletes in Division I programs. They understand the needs of our athletes and work with them and our optometry students so that both groups benefit from a service that is unique to the University of the Incarnate Word," said Dr. Timothy Wingert, Dean, UIWRSO.

In addition to working with athletes with visual impairments, the Service can also enhance the visual skills of athletes who exhibit no specific visual problems, providing them with an advantage in athletic competition.

As a working and teaching facility, the Sports and Vision Enhancement Service provides optometry interns training and experience in the area of Sports Vision. Both UIWRSO faculty members and interns staff the Sports and Vision Enhancement Service. Dr. Allison Chinn, chief of the Sports and Vision Enhancement Service, Dr. Amy Ferguson and Dr. Brian Foutch are UIWRSO faculty members who were deeply involved in the planning, development, and creation of the Sports and Vision Enhancement Service. The staff performs visual evaluations on UIW varsity athletes to determine visual deficiencies that can be improved and then provides them individualized remediation and enhancement plans that highlight areas for improvement.

Drs. Chinn and Ferguson visited the United States Air Force Academy's Human Performance Service in Colorado Springs, Colorado to train and study their highly successful human performance program. They were able to benchmark and bring back and utilize their best ideas, recommendations and processes.

The Sports and Vision Enhancement Service is located on the first floor of UIW's Barshop Natatorium, which puts it adjacent to the UIW athletic training area allowing athletes to include visual skills training as a part of their regular exercise and fitness program.