

DUKES TURF

Consulting firm conducts FBS feasibility study for JMU athletics strategic plan

BY DON EGLE

In April 2013 the JMU Foundation hired CarrSports Consulting to conduct a Football Bowl Subdivision feasibility study and to assist JMU with its athletics strategic plan. The timing of this study was intended to coincide with the work of the Madison Future Commission. Now that the study is complete, CarrSports continues to work with JMU athletics on further developing its strategic plan. Although the feasibility study does not make a recommendation to JMU on whether it should change conferences, the study provides the university with the appropriate data to make an informed decision about athletic conference alignment if and when it receives an invitation from another conference.

Interest in conference alignment remains high and a significant amount of feedback has been received as a part of the Madison Future Commission. The JMU Board of Visitors met on Oct. 4 to discuss several important topics including an update on the Madison Future Commission and the release of the athletics study from CarrSports.

On behalf of the JMU Board of Visitors, Rector Joseph Funkhouser expressed appreciation for the care taken in the preparation of the CarrSports report. The board concurred with the administration's recommendation that JMU release the report publicly and engage the various university constituencies in a dialogue on these issues within the larger context of the univer-

sity's strategic plan. Funkhouser also commented on the board's appreciation for the administration's commitment to transparency, civil discourse and to an inclusive process that is grounded in facts and evidence.

President Jonathan R. Alger thanked board members for their support of the administration's recommendation and thanked CarrSports Consulting for their thorough analysis. Beginning with the Presidential Listening Tour last year, Alger expressed his continued commitment to fostering an environment in which members of the JMU community can learn from and with each other through open communications and civil discourse. Alger outlined that as with all other issues and challenges facing the university, questions related to athletics and conference alignment must be addressed within the broader framework of the university's mission, vision and strategic plan.

The JMU administration and athletics leadership now have data and facts on which to base thoughtful and informed consideration and decisions. This data, along with the open and inclusive process that the university community has put in place, will help in decision making about the university's future. ■

→ Review the work of the Madison Future Commission and read CarrSports Consulting's report at www.jmu.edu/madisonfuture



CarrSports Consulting conducted a FBS feasibility study for JMU Athletics to help the university make informed decisions on a conference alignment.