



Student-Athlete Mental Health Considerations

Jeni Shannon, Ph.D., CMPC

Director, Carolina Athletics Mental Health and Performance Psychology Program

Counseling and Sport Psychologist



Carolina Athletics Mental Health and Performance Psychology Program: If You Build It, They Will Come!

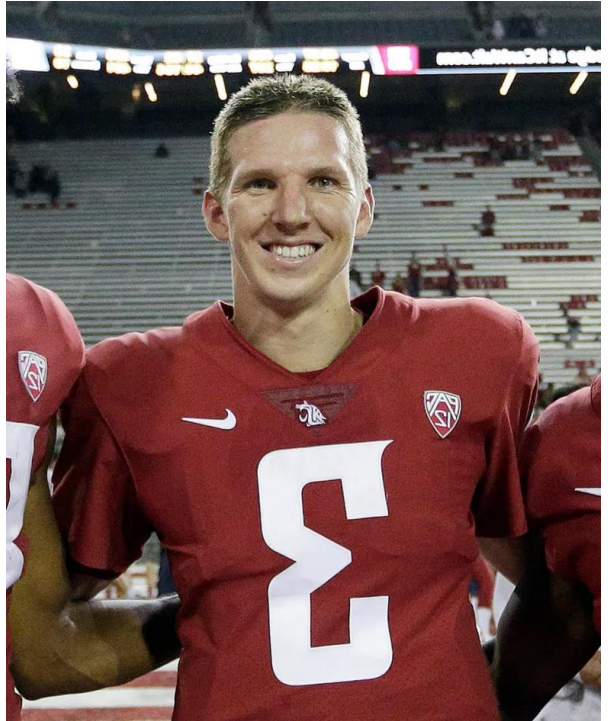
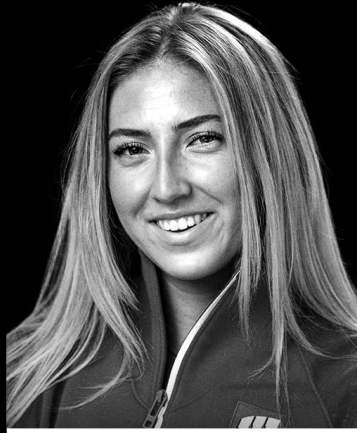


- **January 2017: First Full-Time Mental Health Provider**
- **December 2022: 3 Full-Time Mental Health Providers (2 sport psychologists, 1 social worker), 1 Contract Provider, 2 Practicum Students**
- **Scope of Services:**
 - Individual mental health counseling sessions
 - Individual performance psychology sessions
 - Group sessions (e.g. injured athlete group, body image group)
 - Team sessions – Performance psychology, team culture and cohesion, mental health
 - Consultation
 - Case management and coordination of care
 - Prevention, Outreach and Education





Katie's
Save



Athletics Mental Health Support Considerations



The most recent NCAA data (2022) shows the rates of reported mental health concerns experienced within the last month **were 1.5 to 2 times higher** than have been historically reported by NCAA student-athletes prior to 2020

- **Significant grief, loss, and traumatic events in recent years**
- **Unique demands and pressures**
- **Higher levels of stigma**
- **Role of performance psychology**
- **Opportunity for holistic and systemic support**



Sharing the Student-Athlete Experience





Additional Considerations:

- **Role of Concussion/Injury**
- **Body Image/Disordered Eating**
- **Social Media/Public Presence**
- **NIL (Name, Image, Likeness)**
- **Identity Foreclosure**



Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Health



- **Understanding student-athletes as a specialized population**
- **Appreciating the complexity of intersecting identities**
- **Fostering connection and meaning/purpose beyond sport**
- **Leading with curiosity when they are struggling**
- **Getting training in signs/symptoms, ways of responding, and referrals**
 - **QPR/Mental Health First Aid**
- **Normalizing and destigmatizing mental health**





Thank you for all you do!

**Contact me at any time with questions or to consult about
supporting your student-athletes:**

Jeni Shannon, Ph.D., CMPC

Director, MHPP

jenishannon@unc.edu

