# HEAD COACH Chris Wilkerson



## CHRIS WILKERSON
### Head Coach
### 3rd year at Eastern Illinois as Head Coach
### (10th season at EIU overall)
### Eastern Illinois, 1995

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| Eastern Illinois | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Year | Overall | Conf. | |
| 2022 | 2-9 | 1-4 (OVC) | |
| 2023 | 8-3 | 4-2 (OVC) | No. 24 |
| EIU | 10-12 | 5-6 | |
| | | | |
| **University of Chicago Record** | | | |
| 2021 | 8-2 | 7-2 (MWC) | |
| 2020 | *Season cancelled COVID-19 | | |
| 2019 | 6-3 | 6-1 (MWC) | |
| 2018 | 7-3 | 7-1 (MWC) | |
| 2017 | 6-4 | 6-2 (MWC) | |
| 2016 | 4-6 | 4-4 (SAA) | |
| 2015 | 6-4 | 5-3 (SAA) | |
| 2014 | 8-1 | 3-0 (UAA) | UAA title |
| 2013 | 6-4 | 1-2 (UAA) | |
| Totals | 51-27 | 39-15 | 9 years |
| | | | |
| Career | 61-39 | 44-21 | |

**Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as 26th head coach in EIU history on January 26, 2022
* Begins third year as head coach for 2024 season
* Six in voting for Eddie Robinson FCS Coach of the Year Award
* Named Big South-OVC Football Coach of the Year in 2023
* Coached team from 2 wins in 2022 to 8 wins in 2023 (No. 24 FCS Coaches Poll )
* Coached team players that earned Big South-OVC honors in 2023 (six first team selections)
* Coached four players that earned a total of seven All-America honors in 2023
* Coached MJ Flowers - 2023 Jerry Rice Award runner-up and Big South-OVC Freshman of the Year
* Team ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained in 2023
* Team ranked 18th in FCS in scoring defense in 2023
* Team ranked 25th in FCS in passing offense in 2023
* Coached team that featured two All-Americans in 2022
* Coached team that had 12 All-OVC selections in 2022 (four first-team selections)
* Team ranked 11th in FCS in fewest penalties in 2022
* Team ranked 16th in passes intercepted in 2022, 29th in turnovers gained
* Team ranked fifth in FCS in net punting
* Served as an assistant coach at Eastern Illinois from 1995-2001 under head coach Bob Spoo
* Coached special teams during entire tenure working on defensive staff (linebackers and defensive line)
* Served as defensive coordinator during final season on staff in 2001
* Helped coach team to four FCS playoff appearances
* Helped coach team to a pair of conference championships as team played in both the Gateway Football Conference and OVC
* Defense and Special Teams units regularly ranked in Top 20 in FCS in numerous categories

**Prior To Eastern Illinois**
* Head football coach at University of Chicago from 2013-21
* Team posted a winning record in seven of eight seasons, 2020 year was not played due to COVID
* Coached an offensive unit that featured the leading rusher in NCAA Division III in 2021 as team posted 8-2 record
* Team also posted an 8-1 record in 2014 winning UAA Conference title
* Guided the University of Chicago program through three different conference alignments posting a 39-15 record in conference play
* Coached three Division III All-Americans
* Coached nine All-Region selections
* Coached four Conference Players of the Year
* Coached 94 All-Conference selections
* (University of Chicago Record – 51-27)
* Coached at Dartmouth College from 2005-13, serving as Associate Head Coach since 2007
* Served as Defensive Coordinator, Special Teams Coordinator, running backs coach and linebackers coach in tenure
* Team ranked in FCS Top 10 nationally in several categories including punt return average, blocked kicks, individual rushing average, fewest fumbles lost
* Dartmouth pass defense ranked 14th in the FCS in debut season as defensive coordinator
* Coached at San Jose State from 2002-04
* In 2003 was a nominee for Broyles Award, given annually to nation's top assistant coach

**Personal**
* Played football at Eastern Illinois for head coach Bob Spoo
* Bachelor's degree from Eastern Illinois in 1995
* He and wife Sharna (a former EIU softball player) have three children
* Native of Indianapolis, Indiana

# ASSISTANT COACHES



## Kyle Derickson
## Associate Head Coach
## Offensive Coordinator / Quarterbacks Coach
## 3rd year at Eastern Illinois
## Butler, 2003

**Recruiting Areas: Ohio, Michigan**
**Illinois Recruiting Counties/Areas: Champaign, Vermilion, Edgar, Douglas, Coles, Cumberland, Clark, Crawford, Jasper, Effingham**

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**Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as an assistant coach in February 2022 on head coach Chris Wilkerson's staff
* Serves as associate head coach, entering third season on staff for 2024
* Coached wide receivers and special teams units in first two seasons
* Promoted to Offensive Coordinator and Quarterbacks coach in January 2024
* Coached two Big South-OVC Football All-Conference wide receivers (1st team Eli Mirza / 2nd team Justin Thomas)
* Coached on offensive staff that ranked 25th in the FCS in passing offense in 2023
* Had four different receivers record a 100-yard receiving game during 2023 season
* Worked on coaching staff that helped produce a turnaround from 2 wins in 2022 to 8 wins in 2023 and No. 24 national ranking
* Kicker Stone Galloway connected on 56-yard field goal vs McNeese (2nd longest in school history)
* Special teams unit was one of top in FCS and OVC with five All-OVC selections
* Coached first team All-OVC players (Stone Galloway and Trey Wilhoit)
* Coached second team All-OVC players (Jack Valente, Mark Aitken, Cooper Willman)
* Coached third team All-American Trey Wilhoit, also named to FCS Punter of the Year Watchlist
* Kicker Stone Galloway ranked second in FCS in field goal percentage
* Punter Trey Wilhoit ranked fifth in FCS in punting average
* Special teams led OVC in blocked kicks, punt returns and kick return defense
* Coached wide receivers group that had four different players catch multiple touchdowns
* Wide receiver group featured six different players that started at least one game last season

**Prior to Eastern Illinois**
* Worked as an assistant coach at the University of Chicago in 2021
* Was the team's offensive coordinator, quarterbacks and wide receivers coach
* Team posted an 8-2 record ans set nine team records including ranking first in NCAA Division III in third down conversion
* Offensive group had six first team All-Conference players, one first team All-Region, one second team All-Region selections
* Helped develop All-American Nick D'Ambrose who led the nation in rushing yards and was second nationally in all-purpose yards
* Worked on the coaching staff at Western Michigan (2017-21)
* Served as the Director of Player Personnel and Special Teams quality control
* Helped recruit and sign four classes ranked in the top three in the Mid-American Conference
* Helped coach four All-Conference special teams performers
* Member of Western Michigan coaching staff for Famous Idaho Potato Bowl (2018) and First Responder Bowl (2019)
* Worked as an assistant coach at Allegheny College (2015-17)
* Was the team's offensive coordinator, quarterbacks and wide receivers coach
* Coached two All-Conference performers
* Worked as an assistant coach at Elmhurst College (2008-14)
* Was team's offensive coordinator in final two seasons with team ranking No. 1 in Division III in time of possession
* Coached 14 All-CCIW performers including one All-American
* Helped team reach 2012 NCAA playoffs, first time in school history, team finished ranked 8th in NCAA

**Personal**
* Played football at Butler University
* Was an All-Conference selection at wide receiver
* Was an Academic All-Conference selection
* Member of passing offense that ranked fifth in FCS
* Bachelor's degree from Butler University in 2003
* Master's degree from Ohio University in 2014
* Native of Barrington, Illinois



**Collin Geier**
**Defensive Coordinator / Linebackers Coach**
**5th year at Eastern Illinois**
**Missouri, 2018**

**EIU Recruiting Areas: Missouri, Kansas**
**Illinois Recruiting Counties/Area: Greene, Calhoun, Macoupin, Jersey, Madison, Bond, Clinton, St. Clair, Washington, Monroe, Randolph, Perry, Jackson, Union, Alexander, Pulaski**

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**Eastern Illinois**
* Returned to staff as an assistant coach in February 2022 under head coach Chris Wilkerson
* Begins fifth season on EIU coaching staff for 2024 season
* Promoted to Defensive Coordinator in January 2024
* Coached outside linebackers in 2022, moved to coach inside linebackers in 2023
* Was a Graduate Assistant Defensive Coach at EIU in 2019 and 2020
* Worked with Safeties in 2019
* Assisted on a defensive staff that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained in 2023
* Scoring defense was 1st in the Big South-OVC while ranking 19th in the FCS in 2023
* Helped coach a defensive unit that had three first team All-Conference selections including one linebacker
* Worked on coaching staff that helped produce a turnaround from 2 wins in 2022 to 8 wins in 2023 and No. 24 national ranking
* Helped coach defense ranked 30th in FCS in total defense
* Helped coach defense ranked 40th in FCS in turnovers gained
* Helped coach Scout Team and Scout Special Teams
* Defensive unit ranked 16th in interceptions and 29th in turnovers gained in FCS in 2022
* Linebackers unit had two players rank second and third on team in tackles, linebackers racked up 201 total tackles
* Coached first team All-OVC linebacker Elijawah Tolbert and second team All-OVC linebacker Colin Bohanek
* Unit scored one defensive touchdown in 2022 with Alexandar Oyawale

**Prior To Eastern Illinois**
* Worked as a defensive analyst at University of Arkansas in 2021
* Helped work with linebacker group that had three players with more than 100 tackles
* Scripted redzone practice periods - team ranked 13th in FBS football in redzone defense in 2021
* Member of Arkansas staff that posted a 9-4 record in 2021 with a win in the Outback Bowl
* Graduate assistant coach at Central Methodist University in spring of 2019 (coached safeties)
* Student assistant coach at University of Missouri in 2018
* Helped coach SAM linebackers, scout team wide receivers and tight ends

**Personal**
* Played football at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn in 2014 season
* Bachelor's degree from University of Missouri in 2018
* Master's degree from Eastern Illinois University in 2021
* Native of Naperville, Illinois (played at Benet Academy in Lisle)

# ASSISTANT COACHES



**John Cannova**
**Offensive Line Coach / Run Game Coordinator**
**3rd year at Eastern Illinois**
**North Central College, 2014**

**EIU Recruiting Areas: Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota**
**Illinois Recruiting Counties/Areas: Cook, Boone, McHenry, Lake**

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**Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as an assistant coach in February 2022 on head coach Chris Wilkerson's staff
* Serves as offensive line coach, enters third year on staff for 2024 season
* Promoted to Offensive Run Game Coordinator in January 2024
* Coached two All-Big South-OVC Football selections in 2023 (1st team Chad Strickland / 2nd team Sebastian Pares)
* Coached an offensive line that blocked for running back MJ Flowers, 2023 Jerry Rice Award runner-up
* Coached Freshman All-American Offensive Lineman Nic DiSanto in 2023
* Helped coach an offensive unit that ranked 25th in the FCS in passing offense
* Offensive Lineman Chad Strickland named an FCSADA Academic All-Star, Doris Robinson Award Finalist and Academic Big South-OVC selection
* Worked on coaching staff that helped produce a turnaround from 2 wins in 2022 to 8 wins in 2023 and No. 24 national ranking
* Coached an offensive line unit that had eight different starting line-up combinations over 11 games in 2022
* Coached second team All-OVC tackle Chad Strickland in 2022
* Offensive group ranked 11th in fewest penalty yards per game in FCS
* Team had three 400-yard total offense games with a high of 441 against FBS member Northern Illinois
* Team rushed for 300+ yards in back-to-back games with 339 against Murray State and 340 against Northwestern State

**Prior to Eastern Illinois**
* Worked as an offensive graduate assistant coach at Texas Tech (2019-2021)
* Helped coach offensive line including serving as offensive line coach for two games in 2020 due to COVID protocols
* Helped mentor nine All-Big 12 Conference selections
* Offensive line ranked in the Top 35 in the FBS in fewest sacks allowed all three seasons, ranked 7th in 2019
* Member of Texas Tech coaching staff for Liberty Bowl (2021)
* Worked as an offensive graduate assistant coach at Utah State (2017-18)
* Helped coach offensive line including serving as offensive line coach in the 2018 New Mexico Bowl
* Helped mentor six All-Mountain West Conference selections
* Offense ranked in the Top 30 in the FBS in both seasons including No. 2 in points per game in 2018
* Offensive line ranked third in fewest sacks allowed in FBS in 2018
* Member of Utah State coaching staff for New Mexico Bowl (2018) and Arizona Bowl (2017)
* Worked as an assistant coach at St. Ambrose University (2014-17)
* Coached offensive line with seven All-Conference selections
* Team was ranked #20 in final NAIA poll of 2015

**Personal**
* Played football at North Central College
* Starter on three CCIW Championship teams
* Earned CCIW All-Academic Honors
* Helped team advance to three NCAA Division III playoffs (2011, 2012, 2013)
* Bachelor's degree from North Central College in 2014
* Master's degree from Texas Tech University in 2020
* Native of Naperville, Illinois (attended Benet Academy in Lisle)



**Andrew Brady**
**Special Teams Coordinator / Outside Linebackers & Nickel**
**3rd year at Eastern Illinois**
**Wheaton College, 2019**

**EIU Recruiting Areas: Indiana, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina**

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**Eastern Illinois**
* Promoted to Special Teams Coordinator in January of 2024
* Enters third season on staff, second as a full-time member for 2024 season
* Hired as outside linebackers coach in March of 2023 on head coach Chris Wilkerson's coaching staff
* Assisted on a defensive staff that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained in 2023
* Scoring defense was 1st in the Big South-OVC while ranking 19th in the FCS in 2023
* Helped coach a defensive unit that had three first team All-Conference selections including one linebacker
* Worked on coaching staff that helped produce a turnaround from 2 wins in 2022 to 8 wins in 2023 and No. 24 national ranking
* Assisted on a defensive staff that ranked 16th in FCS in interceptions and 29th in turnovers gained in 2022
* Worked as a defensive graduate assistant coach during 2022 season

**Prior To Eastern Illinois**
* Coached outside linebackers at Wheaton College in 2019 (CCIW Champions)
* Coached outside linebackers at Harding in 2020
* Coached wide receivers at Harding 2021 (GAC Champions)

**Personal**
* Four-year member of Wheaton College football team
* Bachelor's degree from Wheaton College in 2019
* Master's degree from Harding University in 2021
* Native of Wheaton, Illinois



**Maurice Fleming**
**Defensive Backs Coach / Defensive Pass Game Coordinator**
**2nd year at Eastern Illinois**
**Iowa, 2016**

**EIU Recruiting Areas: Texas, Colorado, Utah**
**Illinois Recruiting Counties/Area: Cook**

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**Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as an assistant coach on Chris Wilkerson's football staff in April of 2023
* Will coach the cornerbacks, entering second season on staff for 2024
* Promoted to Defensive Pass Game Coordinator in January 2024
* Coached All-American corner Russell Dandy in 2023 (Walter Camp AA)
* Coached Big South-OVC Football 1st Team selection Russell Dandy in 2023
* Coached national FCS leader in passes defended in Russell Dandy (19 total)
* Assisted on a defensive staff that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained in 2023
* Scoring defense was 1st in the Big South-OVC while ranking 19th in the FCS in 2023
* Helped coach a defensive unit that had three first team All-Conference selections
* Worked on coaching staff that helped produce a turnaround from 2 wins in 2022 to 8 wins in 2023 and No. 24 national ranking

**Prior to Eastern Illinois**
* Worked as a defensive graduate assistant at the University of Houston in 2022
* Helped Houston post an 8-5 record appearing in Radiance Technologies Independence Bowl (win over Louisiana)
* Helped coach two second team All-American Athletic Conference selections in defensive backfield
* Helped coach one player selected to participate in the Hula Bowl in 2022

**Personal**
* Began college playing career at University of Iowa for three seasons
* Helped Iowa play in three Bowl Games (2013 Outback), (2014 Taxslayer) and (2015 Rose Bowl)
* In final season Iowa posted 12-2 record including 8-0 in Big Ten to play in the Rose Bowl
* Played final college season at West Virginia University
* Helped West Virginia go 10-3 including 7-2 in the Big 12
* Played in 2016 Russell Athletic Bowl
* Bachelor's degree from Iowa in 2016
* Undrafted free agent with Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 2017
* Spent 2017 and 2018 on NFL Rosters and NFL Practice Squads
* Played 2019 season for Ottawa Redblacks of Canadian Football League
* Played for Louisville Xtreme in Indoor Football League
* Native of Chicago, Illinois



**Turner Pugh**
**Running Backs Coach**
**Recruiting Coordinator**
**3rd year at Eastern Illinois**
**Northern Illinois, 2004**

**EIU Recruiting Areas: Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi**
**Illinois Recruiting Counties/Areas: Kane, Kendall, DuPage**

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**Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as an assistant coach in February 2022 on head coach Chris Wilkerson's staff
* Coaches running backs, enters third year on staff for 2024 season
* Added recruiting coordinator duties in spring of 2023
* Coached 2023 Jerry Rice Award Runner-Up MJ Flowers who was second in nation in rushing among FCS freshman
* Coached Flowers who earned multiple Freshman All-American honors and was national freshman of the week one time in 2023
* Coached Flowers who earned first team Big South-OVC Football honors and was Freshman of the Year
* Coached on an offensive staff that ranked 3rd in the Big South-OVC in total offense in 2023
* Running back group rushed for 1,362 yards and 16 touchdowns with a pair of individual 200-yard rushing performances during the year in 2023
* Worked on coaching staff that helped produce a turnaround from 2 wins in 2022 to 8 wins in 2023 and No. 24 national ranking
* Coached group that had five different running backs carry the ball during the 2022 season
* Team posted back-to-back 300-yard rushing games with 339 at Murray State and 340 vs Northwestern State
* Had two individual backs rush for more than 100 yards in a game in 2022, high of 160 by Kendi Young

**Prior to Eastern Illinois**
* Worked as an assistant coach at Christopher Newport University (2020-21)
* Coached wide receivers and special teams units
* Worked as an assistant coach at North Central College (2013-15)
* Coached running backs and helped develop 3rd Down Passing Game Plan
* Worked as an assistant coach at Indiana State (2011)
* Coached wide receivers unit
* Worked as an assistant coach at Fordham (2010)
* Coached running backs group
* Worked as an offensive intern at Georgia State (2009)
* Assisted with coaching wide receivers
* Worked as an assistant coach at Marietta College (2008)
* Coached wide receivers and special teams
* Worked as a recruiting assistant at Indiana (2007)
* Began coaching career as a student intern at Northern Illinois

**Personal**
* Played football at Northern Illinois University
* Bachelor's degree from Northern Illinois University in 2004
* Worked in private sector as an account manager for CDW for four years
* Native of Elgin, Illinois (attended Larkin HS)



**Carlif Taylor**
**Defensive Line Coach**
**1st year at Eastern Illinois**
**Southern Connecticut, 2014**

**EIU Recruiting Areas: West Virginia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine**
**Illinois Recruiting Counties/Area: Livingston, Tazewell, McLean, Ford, Iroquois, DeWitt, Piatt, Moultrie, Christian, Shelby, Montgomery, Fayette**

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**Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as an assistant coach on head coach Chris Wilkerson's staff in February 2024
* Will coach Panthers defensive line

**Prior To Eastern Illinois**
* Assistant coach at University of Chicago, 2022-23
* Served as defensive line coach and strength & conditioning coach
* Worked with University of Chicago 13 varsity programs, helping several advance to NCAA Tournament appearances based on strength & conditioning program
* Assistant coach at Pope John XXIII High School (2019-21)
* Worked as defensive line coach / strength & conditioning coach
* Assistant coach at Fordham Prep School (2017-18)
* Worked as defensive line coach / strength & conditioning coach
* Founder of Taylor Made Fitness - strength & conditioning company in Tri-State Area (NY, NJ, CT)

**Personal**
* Played in National Football League for four seasons (New York Giants 2014-16, Dallas Cowboys 2017)
* Played football at Southern Connecticut State University
* Was a multiple-time All-Northeast 10 Conference selection
* Bachelor's degree from Southern Connecticut in 2014
* Mentor for Capital Prep Charter School
* Native of New York City, New York

**Tino Smith II**
**Wide Receivers Coach**
**1st year at Eastern Illinois**
**Savannah State, 2021**

**Recruiting Areas: Indiana, Michigan**
**Illinois Recruiting Counties/Area: Clay, Richland, Lawrence, Marion, Jefferson, Wayne, Edwards, Wabash, Franklin, Hamilton, White, Williamson, Saline, Gallatin, Hardin, Pope, Johnson, Massac**

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**Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as assistant coach in January 2024 on head coach Chris Wilkerson's staff
* Serves as wide receivers coach, enters first year on staff for 2024 season

**Prior to Eastern Illinois**
* Graduate assistant coach at Michigan State for 2023 season
* Assisted wide receivers coach at Michigan State
* Assistant coach at Albion College from 2018-2022
* Served as assistant head coach & recruiting coordinator during 2022 season
* Coached wide receivers group with All-American wide receiver and later EIU player Justin Thomas
* Coached two Conference Offensive MVP's in Justin Thomas (2021) and Mark Tocco (2022)
* Helped coach team to 2021 NCAA Division III playoff appearance
* Coached five All-Conference wide receivers

**Personal**
* Played football at Savannah State University
* Team captain and four-year starter
* Bachelor's degree from Savannah State University in 2018
* Attended Fork Union Military Academy
* Native of Carmel, Indiana

**Andrew Strobel**
**Safeties Coach**
**1st year at Eastern Illinois**
**Northern Michigan, 2009**

**Recruiting Areas: Kentucky, Tennessee, California**
**Illinois Recruiting Counties/Area: Hancock, McDonough, Fulton, Mason, Logan, Macon, Sangamon, Menard, Cass, Morgan, Scott, Pike, Brown, Schuyler, Adams**

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**Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as an assistant coach in January 2024 on head coach Chris Wilkerson's staff
* Serves as safeties coach entering first season on staff for the 2024 season

**Prior to Eastern Illinois**
* Assistant coach at Morehead State six seasons (2018-2023)
* Served as associate head coach and defensive coordinator (2021-23)
* Served as associate head coach, special teams coordinator and linebackers coach (2018-2020)
* Coached defensive unit that ranked fourth in the FCS in interceptions and sixth in the FCS in tackles for loss in 2023
* Coached two players that tied for the FCS national lead in interceptions in 2023 (Kaleb Lyons and Jihad McCall)
* Defensive consistently ranked among best in Pioneer Football League all three seasons
* Coached three All-Americans including Buck Buchanan Award Finalist Vaughn Taylor in 2021
* Defensive Coordinator at Alma College (2016-18)
* Coached #1 Red Zone Defense in the Nation (all Divisions)
* Assistant coach at Alfred State College (2015)
* Served as special teams coordinator and defensive backfield coach
* Assistant coach at East Stroudsburg (2014)
* Served as special teams coordinator and defensive backfield coach
* Assistant coach at Culver-Stockton College (2010-2013)
* Served as defensive coordinator during 2013 season
* Served as special teams coordinator and defensive backfield coach
* Defense ranked in the Top 15 nationally in pass defense in back-to-back seasons

**Personal**
* Played football at Northern Michigan University
* Three time member of Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Fall Academic Team
* Named Northern Michigan program Freshman of the Year in 2007
* Bachelor's degree from Northern Michigan University in 2009
* Master's degree from Concordia University (Calif.) in 2013
* He and wife Carrie have four children



**Cole Hoover**
**Tight Ends Coach**
**2nd year at Eastern Illinois**
**Eastern Illinois, 2021**

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**Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as assistant football coach in May of 2024
* Begins second stint on Eastern Illinois staff for the 2024 season
* Worked as a graduate assistant coach at EIU with offense in 2022

**Prior to Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as an assistant coach at Western Illinois, coached WIU during 2024 spring practice
* Graduate assistant coach at Ball State working with offensive line group

**Personal**
* Five year member of Eastern Illinois football team
* Bachelor's degree from Eastern Illinois University in 2021
* Father Jeff was a former assistant coach at Eastern Illinois
* Native of Charleston, Illinois

# ASSISTANT COACHES



**David Brubaker**
**Director of Football Operations**
**2nd year at Eastern Illinois**
**Penn State, 2019**

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**Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as Director of Football Operations in Spring of 2023
* Enters second year on staff for the 2024 season
* Part of staff that went from 2 wins in 2022 to 8 wins in 2023 with No. 24 FCS Coaches Poll national ranking
* Team consisted of ten Big South-OVC Football All-Conference selections in 2023
* Team had four players earn All-America honors in 2023

**Prior To Eastern Illinois**
* Director of Football Operations at Morehead State in 2022
* Assistant Offensive Line Coach at Morehead State
* Worked at Lehigh University in 2020 and 2021
* Worked in football operations, special teams analyst and recruiting quality control
* Helped with special teams unit that ranked No. 1 in FCS in blocked punts
* Worked at Penn State as coaching and recruiting intern for two years
* Worked as a volunteer defensive line coach at Warwick Senior High School

**Personal**
* Bachelor's degree from Penn State University in 2019.



**Jacob Hillman**
**Director of Football Performance**
**1st year at Eastern Illinois**
**Iowa State, 2023**

**Eastern Illinois**
* Hired as Director of Football Performance in March of 2024
* Enters first season with EIU football for 2024

**Prior to Eastern Illinois**
* Graduate Assistant strength coach at Eastern Michigan
* Worked with Eastern Michigan football program and several Olympic sports including women's rowing
* Worked as an intern on Ohio State Football Strength & Conditioning Staff in spring of 2023
* Holds CSCS Certificiation through NSCA
* Certified in Red Cross First Aid, CPR and AED

**Personal**
* Four year member of Iowa State football program
* Earned Academic All-Big 12 Honors
* Bachelor's degree from Iowa State University in 2023
* Began collegiate career at Illinois Wesleyan University playing football
* Father, Aaron is Director of Player Development at Iowa State
* Mother, Dina, was a standout field hockey player winning three NCAA National Championships at Old Dominion
* Native of Gilbert, Iowa

# SUPPORT STAFF

## NICOLE JACKSON

Football Academic Services Director
Years at EIU: 3rd year

Nicole Jackson was hired as the assistant director of academic services in the spring of 2022. Jackson provides academic support for the Panthers football team.

Prior to joining the staff at EIU, Jackson worked in donor relations at Lake Land College. Jackson also has worked at Franklin University as a Community College Regional Manager.

She holds a bachelor's degree from Oklahoma Christian University and a master's degree from Graceland University. Her husband Bill Jackson is the athletic director at Lake Land College. They have three children.

## CLINT BAYS

Coordinator of Equipment
Years at EIU: 17th year

Clint Bays enters his 17th season as the coordinator of equipment and stadium facilities for Eastern Illinois football. Bays is a certified athletic equipment manager through the AEMA. He holds both a bachelor's and masters degree from Eastern Illinois University.

He previously worked with the Illinois Department of Corrections and Transportation Security Administration. He was the assistant equipment manager at EIU in 2007.

Bays and his wife Kirsten have four boys - Andy, John, Jake and Nick.

## ADDITIONAL FOOTBALL SUPPORT STAFF

| | |
|---|---|
| Head Strength Coach | Joe Neihaus |
| Head Athletic Trainer | Jim Nave |
| Assistant Football Athletic Trainer | Alexis Fenrick |
| Assistant Football Athletic Trainer | Samantha Reinert |
| Assistant Football Athletic Trainer | Noah Davis |
| Sports Nutrition | Haley Schmitz |
| Orthopedic Surgeon | Sarah Bush Lincoln Sports Medicine |
| Team Doctor | Dr. Andy Bays |
| Team Dentist | Dr. Jennifer Kennedy |
| Football Graduate Assistant Offense | Jackson Ostroski |
| Football Graduate Assistant Defense | Steven Marks |
| Football Graduate Assistant Operations | Andrew Scheff |
| Football Graduate Assistant Performance | Jon Suppelsa |
| Football Quality Control Offense | Isaiah Nelson |
| Football Quality Control Defense | Ryan DeMarois |
| Football Quality Control Special Teams | Chris Gatton |
| Football Player Personnel | Matt Lindsey |

## SCOTT GOEHNER

Football Athletic Trainer
Alma Mater: Milwaukee, 2015
Years at EIU: 4th Year

Scott Goehner joined the Eastern Illinois University Sports Medicine staff as an Associate Athletic Trainer in July of 2021 and serves as the athletic trainer for the Panther football team. Goehner brings five years of experience working with football programs at the NCAA Division I level.

Goehner came to EIU following three years as an assistant athletic trainer at Western Michigan where he worked with the Broncos football and track programs. He served as an assistant athletic trainer on three straight winning Western Michigan teams including bowl games in 2018 (Famous Idaho Potato Bowl) and 2019 (SERVPRO First Responder Bowl). He was the primary athletic trainer for the indoor and outdoor track programs. During his time at Western Michigan, Goehner coordinated COVID-19 testing and care, served on mental health and capital equipment/supply sub-committees, and lead a team of athletic trainers to transition to a new EMR program.

Prior to joining the staff at Western Michigan, Goehner worked for two years as a graduate assistant athletic trainer at Eastern Michigan. During that those two years he worked directly with the Eagles football program. Part of his role included organizing, packing, unpacking and setup of off-site Athletic Training facilities for all away games including the 2016 Popeyes Bahamas Bowl and 2017 off-site fall training camp.

He worked in the spring of 2016 as an interim athletic trainer at Milwaukee providing coverage for the women's soccer spring season as well as helping with cross country and track. He completed his undergraduate Athletic Training Internship at Northwestern University supporting the Wildcats football team during the 2015 season.

Goehner completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee in 2015 with a Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training. He earned his Master's Degree in 2018 from Eastern Michigan. Goehner is a NATABOC Certified Athletic Trainer. He also holds a Bachelor of Science in History from the University of Wisconsin – Platteville.

A native of Sussex, Wis., he and his wife Danielle, have two daughters Grace and Eliana.

# 2024 EIU PANTHER ROSTER

| # | NAME | POS | HT | WT | YR | EXP | HOMETOWN (HIGH SCHOOL/JC/LAST) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | Ira Armstead II | LB | 6-4 | 240 | Sr | 2 | South Bend, Ind. (Adams / Univ. of Virginia) |
| 0 | Cody Davidson | WR | 6-2 | 190 | Jr | TR | Beaverton, Ore. (Beaverton / Santa Rosa JC) |
| 1 | Nick Coates | SAF | 5-10 | 190 | Sr | 3 | Louisville, Ky. (Male) |
| 1 | Terrance Gipson | WR | 6-0 | 190 | Sr | RS | Kingwood, Texas (Westfield / East Los Angeles College) |
| 2 | Mark Aitken | DB | 5-9 | 180 | R-Sr | 3 | Chicago, Ill. (Kenwood Academy / Northern Illinois Univ.) |
| 2 | CJ Nelson | WR | 5-11 | 175 | R-So | TR | North Richland Hills, Texas (Richland / Univ. of Houston) |
| 3 | NiJhay Burt | DB | 5-11 | 185 | Jr | 2 | Munhall, Pa. (Steel Valley) |
| 3 | Pierce Holley | QB | 6-3 | 225 | Grad | 1 | Arvada, Colo. (Lakewood / Georgetown Univ.) |
| 4 | Moses Alexander | DB | 6-3 | 195 | R-Jr | TR | Galveston, Texas (Ball / Univ. of Houston) |
| 4 | MJ Flowers | RB | 6-1 | 220 | R-So | 1 | Cincinnati, Ohio (Colerain) |
| 5 | Anthony Shockey | LB | 6-1 | 230 | R-Sr | 3 | Lombard, Ill. (Glenbard East) |
| 5 | Surahz Buncom | WR | 6-3 | 175 | R-Fr | TR | Chula Vista, Calif. (Mater Dei Catholic / Univ. of Kansas) |
| 6 | Joel Barrows | DL | 6-3 | 240 | R-Sr | 3 | Chicago, Ill. (Brooks Prep) |
| 6 | DeAirious Smith | WR | 5-11 | 185 | Sr | 4 | Lexington, Ky. (Lexington Christian Academy) |
| 7 | Kiwaun Davis | DB | 6-3 | 175 | R-Fr | TR | Chicago, Ill. (Kenwood Academy / Northern Illinois Univ.) |
| 7 | Eli Mirza | WR | 5-11 | 195 | Sr | 1 | Sacramento, Calif. (Monterey Trail / Sierra College) |
| 8 | Tienne Fridge | DB | 6-2 | 210 | Sr | 1 | Sacramento, Calif. (Elk Grove / Sacramento City College) |
| 8 | Joey Sprinkle | QB | 6-4 | 220 | Jr | TR | Monticello, Ill. (Monticello / St. Ambrose Univ.) |
| 9 | Tre'jon Lewis | DL | 6-4 | 285 | R-Sr | 2 | Manor, Texas (Manor / Texas Tech Univ.) |
| 9 | Aaron Rice | WR | 6-5 | 200 | R-So | 1 | Farmington Hills, Mich. (North Farmington) |
| 11 | Elijawah Tolbert | LB | 6-1 | 230 | Sr | 3 | Country Club Hills, Ill. (Hillcrest) |
| 11 | Anthony Manaves | TE | 6-4 | 230 | R-Sr | 4 | Chicago, Ill. (St. Patrick) |
| 12 | Akili Hubbard | SAF | 6-2 | 195 | R-Jr | TR | Bellflower, Calif. (Bellflower / Univ. of Kansas) |
| 12 | Collin Willard | WR | 5-11 | 200 | Fr | HS | North Olmsted, Ohio (North Olmsted) |
| 13 | Keshawn Lewis-Hunt | LB | 6-0 | 220 | Fr | HS | Chicago, Ill. (Morgan Park) |
| 13 | Cooper Willman | WR | 6-1 | 205 | R-Jr | 3 | Sterling, Ill. (Sterling) |
| 14 | Akin Adigun | SAF | 6-3 | 185 | R-Fr | RS | Little Elm, Texas (Lone Star) |
| 14 | Blainey Dowling | QB | 6-2 | 200 | R-Fr | RS | Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mount Carmel) |
| 15 | Malik Rainey | DB | 5-11 | 190 | R-Jr | 1 | Chicago, Ill. (Bolingbrook / Univ. of Cincinnati) |
| 15 | Connor Wolf | QB | 6-3 | 205 | Fr | HS | Ada, Mich. (Grand Rapids Central Catholic) |
| 16 | Zay Gentry | DB | 6-0 | 195 | Sr | 2 | Anna, Texas (Anna) |
| 16 | Kevin Conway | QB | 6-2 | 210 | R-So | SQ | New Lenox, Ill. (Providence Catholic / Diamond Football Academy) |
| 19 | Phoenix Porter | LB | 6-1 | 220 | R-Jr | 2 | Fairfield, Ohio (Fairfield) |
| 19 | Jacob Rosenstiel | QB | 6-4 | 210 | Fr | HS | Boerne, Texas (Geneva School of Boerne) |
| 20 | Kaleb Lyons | DB | 5-11 | 185 | Jr | TR | Antioch, Tenn. (Brentwood Academy / Morehead State Univ.) |
| 20 | Chris Caldwell | RB | 5-10 | 190 | So | TR | O'Fallon, Ill. (O'Fallon / Western Kentucky Univ.) |
| 21 | Jay Pearson | RB | 6-0 | 210 | R-So | 1 | McKees Rocks, Pa. (Sto-Rox Junior-Senior) |
| 22 | Kaelin Drakeford | DB | 6-4 | 210 | R-Jr | 2 | Harrodsburg, Ky. (Mercer County) |
| 23 | Isaiah Houi | DB | 5-10 | 170 | Fr | HS | Rockton, Ill. (Hononegah) |
| 24 | Collin Tyson | DB | 6-0 | 195 | R-Jr | 2 | Kansas City, Mo. (Platte County R-3) |
| 25 | Christopher Sharp | CB | 5-11 | 180 | R-Fr | RS | St. Louis, Mo. (DeSmet Jesuit) |
| 26 | Makhi Wilson | SAF | 6-0 | 185 | R-Fr | RS | Bettendorf, Iowa (Pleasant Valley) |
| 27 | Josh Brown | SAF | 6-1 | 195 | Fr | HS | Suwanee, Ga. (Peachtree Ridge) |
| 28 | Jacarre Fleming | RB | 5-8 | 195 | Fr | HS | Hahira, Ga. (Lowndes) |
| 29 | Kendi Young | RB | 5-11 | 210 | Sr | 3 | Calumet City, Ill. (Thornton Fractional North) |
| 30 | Allen Brown III | DB | 5-11 | 180 | Fr | HS | St. Louis, Mo. (Eureka) |
| 31 | Johnovan Wysinger | WR | 6-1 | 170 | Fr | HS | Chicago, Ill. (Morgan Park) |
| 32 | Ryan Kilburg | SAF | 6-0 | 200 | R-Jr | TR | Park Ridge, Ill. (Maine South / Western Michigan Univ.) |
| 33 | Jack Pilson | LB | 6-0 | 225 | R-Sr | 1 | Mattoon, Ill. (Mattoon / Lehigh Univ.) |
| 34 | Jordyn Stewart | LB | 6-0 | 230 | Fr | HS | Homewood, Ill. (Homewood-Flossmoor) |
| 35 | Zeke Lewis | RB | 6-0 | 210 | R-Jr | SQ | Decatur, Ill. (Decatur St. Teresa) |
| 36 | Dillon Conway | SAF | 6-3 | 210 | Fr | HS | Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mt. Carmel) |
| 37 | Grady Catanzano | LB | 6-1 | 220 | Fr | HS | Mt. Prospect, Ill. (Prospect) |
| 38 | Max Loveall | WR | 6-4 | 195 | Fr | HS | Richmond, Ill. (Richmond-Burton) |
| 39 | Tyler Clark | RB | 5-10 | 205 | R-Jr | 1 | Chicago, Ill. (Phillips) |
| 40 | Isaiah Richardson | SAF | 6-5 | 210 | R-Fr | RS | Suwanee, Ga. (Collins Hill) |
| 41 | Peyton Wilkerson | DL | 6-1 | 250 | R-Fr | RS | Mokena, Ill. (Lincoln-Way Central) |
| 43 | Chase McConnell | TE | 6-5 | 220 | Fr | HS | Lebanon, Tenn. (Watertown) |

#WeNotMe #EIUBLEEDBLUE 2023 EASTERN ILLINOIS PANTHER FOOTBALL

# 2024 EIU PANTHERS ROSTER

| # | NAME | POS | HT | WT | YR | EXP | HOMETOWN (HIGH SCHOOL/JC) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 44 | Luke Wagner | DL | 6-4 | 240 | R-Jr | 1 | Washington, Pa. (McGuffey / Santa Barbara City College) |
| 45 | Caden Tellenson | LB | 5-11 | 220 | R-Fr | RS | Redondo Beach, Calif. (Redondo Union) |
| 46 | Nico Carrier | K | 5-9 | 170 | Fr | HS | Naperville, Ill. (Metea Valley) |
| 47 | Drew Schiller | K | 6-1 | 170 | Fr | HS | New Lenox, Ill. (Lincoln-Way Central) |
| 48 | Julian Patino | K | 5-10 | 200 | R-Jr | 1 | Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mt. Carmel) |
| 49 | Jesse Garza | LB | 6-2 | 230 | R-Jr | RS | Nipomo, Calif. (Nipomo / Allan Hancock College) |
| 50 | Jerrad Price | DL | 6-3 | 300 | Grad | TR | Spurlockville, W.Va. (Lincoln County / Univ. of Charleston) |
| 51 | Payton Orth | LB | 5-11 | 220 | Sr | 3 | Frankfort, Ill. (Lincoln-Way East) |
| 52 | Jamari Johnson | DL | 6-4 | 255 | R-Jr | 1 | Chicago, Ill. (De La Salle Institute) |
| 53 | King Smith | DL | 6-3 | 315 | Fr | HS | Decatur, Ill. (Decatur MacArthur) |
| 54 | Nic DiSanto | OL | 6-5 | 320 | So | 1 | Wyandotte, Mich. (Gabriel Richard) |
| 55 | Drew Wilder | OL | 6-3 | 305 | R-Jr | 1 | Williamsburg, Va. (Jamestown / Iowa Western CC) |
| 56 | Christian Takatch | DL | 6-3 | 245 | So | TR | Sunbury, Ohio (Big Walnut / Notre Dame College) |
| 57 | Panayiotis Mihalopoulos | OL | 6-3 | 310 | R-Fr | RS | Chicago, Ill. (Loyola Academy) |
| 58 | Isaiah Hare | DL | 6-2 | 290 | Fr | HS | Mt. Washington, Ky. (Bullitt East) |
| 59 | Liam Carr | LB | 6-0 | 225 | R-Jr | SQ | Okemos, Mich. (Okemos / Michigan State Univ.) |
| 60 | Aidan Archibald | DL | 6-2 | 255 | Fr | HS | Charleston, Ill. (Charleston) |
| 61 | Ruben Popoca | K | 5-11 | 180 | R-Fr | RS | Mundelein, Ill. (Carmel Catholic) |
| 62 | Brennan Anderson | OL | 6-5 | 345 | R-Jr | RS | Dallas Center, Iowa (Dallas Center-Grimes/Iowa Western CC) |
| 63 | Noah Howard | OL | 6-5 | 305 | R-Jr | RS | Clinton, Iowa (Clinton / Iowa Central College) |
| 64 | Connor Shelby | OL | 6-4 | 280 | Fr | HS | Mt. Carmel, Ill. (Mt. Carmel) |
| 65 | Carson Fichtel | OL | 6-3 | 295 | R-So | SQ | Heath, Texas (Rockwall-Heath) |
| 66 | Jack Valente | OL/LS | 6-5 | 320 | Sr | 3 | Batavia, Ill. (Batavia) |
| 67 | Rahfeeq Katumbusi | OL | 6-3 | 320 | Fr | HS | Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mt. Carmel) |
| 68 | Matthew Allen | OL | 6-8 | 300 | R-Fr | RS | Bourbonnais, Ill. (Bradley-Bourbonnais) |
| 69 | Kwan Johnson | OL | 6-1 | 310 | Fr | HS | Blue Island, Ill. (Dwight D. Eisenhower) |
| 70 | Alejandro Arellano | OL | 6-3 | 305 | R-So | TR | Sterling, Ill. (Sterling / College of DuPage) |
| 71 | Sebastian Pares | OL | 6-6 | 310 | R-Sr | 1 | Joliet, Ill. (Wheaton Academy / Univ. of Sioux Falls) |
| 72 | Elkhanan Tanelus | OL | 6-2 | 320 | Grad | 4 | Naples, Fla. (Barron Collier) |
| 73 | Clint Chamley | OL | 6-5 | 310 | Fr | HS | Kahoka, Mo. (Clark County) |
| 74 | Haven Hatfield | OL | 6-3 | 295 | R-So | SQ | Tuscola, Ill. (Tuscola) |
| 75 | Jonathan Arellano | OL | 6-3 | 310 | R-Jr | 1 | Lancaster, Calif. (Bishop Alemany / College of the Canyons) |
| 76 | Bryce Burnett | OL | 6-4 | 295 | R-So | SQ | Danville,Ill. (Westville) |
| 77 | Sandro Malicevic | OL | 6-5 | 315 | So | TR | Saratoga, Calif. (Prospect / San Jose City College) |
| 78 | Joseph Solomon | OL | 6-5 | 295 | R-Jr | TR | Indianapolis, Ind. (Bishop Chatard / Appalachian State Univ.) |
| 79 | Rasheed Anderson | OL | 6-5 | 355 | R-So | SQ | Oak Park, Ill. (Fenwick) |
| 80 | Quenton Rogers | WR | 6-2 | 190 | R-Fr | RS | Mahomet-Seymour, Ill. (Mahomet-Seymour) |
| 81 | Alex Herrera | TE | 6-2 | 240 | Jr | TR | Linden, Calif. (Linden / College of the Sequoias) |
| 82 | Joe McNab | TE | 6-6 | 255 | R-Jr | 1 | Madison Heights, Mich. (Lamphere) |
| 83 | David Ajose | WR | 6-5 | 225 | Fr | HS | Akron, Ohio (St. Vincent-St. Mary's) |
| 84 | Jeremy Reeves | WR | 6-4 | 190 | Fr | HS | Chicago, Ill. (Gary Comer College Prep) |
| 85 | Landers Green | WR | 6-3 | 190 | Jr | TR | Wharton, NJ (St. Peter's Prep / Union College) |
| 86 | Jamal Jeffers | WR | 5-11 | 185 | Sr | 1 | Oklahoma City, Okla. (Putnam City North / Northeastern Oklahoma A&M) |
| 87 | Alex Ginnever | TE | 6-5 | 235 | R-So | SQ | Wentzville, Mo. (Holt) |
| 88 | Jordan Sprycha | TE | 6-4 | 240 | Grad | TR | Oak Lawn, Ill. (Oak Lawn / McKendree Ill.) |
| 89 | Daniel Ajose | WR | 6-6 | 215 | Fr | HS | Akron, Ohio (St. Vincent-St. Mary's) |
| 90 | Trevon Piggee-Blake | DL | 6-1 | 290 | R-Fr | RS | St. Louis, Mo. (DeSmet Jesuit) |
| 91 | Nicholas Oliveira-Chace | DL | 6-4 | 275 | Sr | 1 | Cambridge, Mass. (Cambridge Rindge & Latin School / Franklin Pierce Univ.) |
| 92 | Colby Smith | DL | 6-0 | 300 | Sr | 2 | Dunnellon, Fla. (Dunnellon, Fla. / Dodge City CC) |
| 93 | Jacob Horvath | P | 6-1 | 190 | So | 1 | Bentleigh, Australia (McKinnon Secondary) |
| 94 | Alton Jefferson | DL | 6-0 | 290 | Sr | 3 | Louisville, Ky. (Trinity) |
| 95 | Drake Van Hyfte | DL | 6-4 | 280 | R-Jr | 2 | Annawan, Ill. (Annawan-Wethersfield) |
| 96 | Cody Silzer | DL | 6-3 | 260 | R-So | SQ | Lockport, Ill. (Lockport Township) |
| 97 | Tray Ross | DL | 6-4 | 230 | Fr | HS | Danville, Ind. (Danville Community) |
| 98 | Brett Galetti | LS | 6-1 | 230 | R-Jr | 1 | Frankfort, Ill. (Lincoln Way East) |
| 99 | Jaron Hacha | DL | 5-11 | 310 | Sr | 3 | Frankfort, Ill. (Lincoln-Way East) |
|  | Taylor Goodson | SAF | 5-10 | 205 | R-Jr | RS | Suwanee, Ga. (North Gwinnett / Iowa Western CC) |
|  | Cole Silzer | DL | 6-3 | 280 | R-So | SQ | Lockport, Ill. (Lockport Township) |

# 2024 EIU PANTHER ROSTER (alphabetical)

| # | NAME | POS | HT | WT | YR | | HOMETOWN (HIGH SCHOOL/JC/LAST) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | Akin Adigun | SAF | 6-3 | 185 | R-Fr | RS | Little Elm, Texas (Lone Star) |
| 2 | Mark Aitken | DB | 5-9 | 180 | R-Sr | 3 | Chicago, Ill. (Kenwood Academy / Northern Illinois Univ.) |
| 89 | Daniel Ajose | WR | 6-6 | 215 | Fr | HS | Akron, Ohio (St. Vincent-St. Mary's) |
| 83 | David Ajose | WR | 6-5 | 225 | Fr | HS | Akron, Ohio (St. Vincent-St. Mary's) |
| 4 | Moses Alexander | DB | 6-3 | 195 | R-Jr | TR | Galveston, Texas (Ball / Univ. of Houston) |
| 68 | Matthew Allen | OL | 6-8 | 300 | R-Fr | RS | Bourbonnais, Ill. (Bradley-Bourbonnais) |
| 62 | Brennan Anderson | OL | 6-5 | 345 | R-Jr | RS | Dallas Center, Iowa (Dallas Center-Grimes/Iowa Western CC) |
| 79 | Rasheed Anderson | OL | 6-5 | 355 | R-So | SQ | Oak Park, Ill. (Fenwick) |
| 60 | Aidan Archibald | DL | 6-2 | 255 | Fr | HS | Charleston, Ill. (Charleston) |
| 70 | Alejandro Arellano | OL | 6-3 | 305 | R-So | TR | Sterling, Ill. (Sterling / College of DuPage) |
| 75 | Jonathan Arellano | OL | 6-3 | 310 | R-Jr | 1 | Lancaster, Calif. (Bishop Alemany / College of the Canyons) |
| 0 | Ira Armstead II | LB | 6-4 | 240 | Sr | 2 | South Bend, Ind. (Adams / Univ. of Virginia) |
| 6 | Joel Barrows | DL | 6-3 | 240 | R-Sr | 3 | Chicago, Ill. (Brooks Prep) |
| 30 | Allen Brown III | DB | 5-11 | 180 | Fr | HS | St. Louis, Mo. (Eureka) |
| 27 | Josh Brown | SAF | 6-1 | 195 | Fr | HS | Suwanee, Ga. (Peachtree Ridge) |
| 5 | Surahz Buncom | WR | 6-3 | 175 | R-Fr | TR | Chula Vista, Calif. (Mater Dei Catholic / Univ. of Kansas) |
| 76 | Bryce Burnett | OL | 6-4 | 295 | R-So | SQ | Danville,Ill. (Westville) |
| 3 | NiJhay Burt | DB | 5-11 | 185 | Jr | 2 | Munhall, Pa. (Steel Valley) |
| 20 | Chris Caldwell | RB | 5-10 | 190 | So | TR | O'Fallon, Ill. (O'Fallon / Western Kentucky Univ.) |
| 59 | Liam Carr | LB | 6-0 | 225 | R-Jr | SQ | Okemos, Mich. (Okemos / Michigan State Univ.) |
| 46 | Nico Carrier | K | 5-9 | 170 | Fr | HS | Naperville, Ill. (Metea Valley) |
| 37 | Grady Catanzano | LB | 6-1 | 220 | Fr | HS | Mt. Prospect, Ill. (Prospect) |
| 73 | Clint Chamley | OL | 6-5 | 310 | Fr | HS | Kahoka, Mo. (Clark County) |
| 39 | Tyler Clark | RB | 5-10 | 205 | R-Jr | 1 | Chicago, Ill. (Phillips) |
| 1 | Nick Coates | SAF | 5-10 | 190 | Sr | 3 | Louisville, Ky. (Male) |
| 36 | Dillon Conway | SAF | 6-3 | 210 | Fr | HS | Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mt. Carmel) |
| 16 | Kevin Conway | QB | 6-2 | 210 | R-So | SQ | New Lenox, Ill. (Providence Catholic / Diamond Football Academy) |
| 0 | Cody Davidson | WR | 6-2 | 190 | Jr | TR | Beaverton, Ore. (Beaverton / Santa Rosa JC) |
| 7 | Kiwaun Davis | DB | 6-3 | 175 | R-Fr | TR | Chicago, Ill. (Kenwood Academy / Northern Illinois Univ.) |
| 54 | Nic DiSanto | OL | 6-5 | 320 | So | 1 | Wyandotte, Mich. (Gabriel Richard) |
| 14 | Blainey Dowling | QB | 6-2 | 200 | R-Fr | RS | Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mount Carmel) |
| 22 | Kaelin Drakeford | DB | 6-4 | 210 | R-Jr | 2 | Harrodsburg, Ky. (Mercer County) |
| 65 | Carson Fichtel | OL | 6-3 | 295 | R-So | SQ | Heath, Texas (Rockwall-Heath) |
| 28 | Jacarre Fleming | RB | 5-8 | 195 | Fr | HS | Hahira, Ga. (Lowndes) |
| 4 | MJ Flowers | RB | 6-1 | 220 | R-So | 1 | Cincinnati, Ohio (Colerain) |
| 8 | Tienne Fridge | DB | 6-2 | 210 | Sr | 1 | Sacramento, Calif. (Elk Grove / Sacramento City College) |
| 98 | Brett Galetti | LS | 6-1 | 230 | R-Jr | 1 | Frankfort, Ill. (Lincoln Way East) |
| 49 | Jesse Garza | LB | 6-2 | 230 | R-Jr | RS | Nipomo, Calif. (Nipomo / Allan Hancock College) |
| 16 | Zay Gentry | DB | 6-0 | 195 | Sr | 2 | Anna, Texas (Anna) |
| 87 | Alex Ginnever | TE | 6-5 | 235 | R-So | SQ | Wentzville, Mo. (Holt) |
| 1 | Terrance Gipson | WR | 6-0 | 190 | Sr | RS | Kingwood, Texas (Westfield / East Los Angeles College) |
| | Taylor Goodson | SAF | 5-10 | 205 | R-Jr | RS | Suwanee, Ga. (North Gwinnett / Iowa Western CC) |
| 85 | Landers Green | WR | 6-3 | 190 | Jr | TR | Wharton, NJ (St. Peter's Prep / Union College) |
| 99 | Jaron Hacha | DL | 5-11 | 310 | Sr | 3 | Frankfort, Ill. (Lincoln-Way East) |
| 58 | Isaiah Hare | DL | 6-2 | 290 | Fr | HS | Mt. Washington, Ky. (Bullitt East) |
| 74 | Haven Hatfield | OL | 6-3 | 295 | R-So | SQ | Tuscola, Ill. (Tuscola) |
| 81 | Alex Herrera | TE | 6-2 | 240 | Jr | TR | Linden, Calif. (Linden / College of the Sequoias) |
| 3 | Pierce Holley | QB | 6-3 | 225 | Grad | 1 | Arvada, Colo. (Lakewood / Georgetown Univ.) |
| 93 | Jacob Horvath | P | 6-1 | 190 | So | 1 | Bentleigh, Australia (McKinnon Secondary) |
| 23 | Isaiah Houi | DB | 5-10 | 170 | Fr | HS | Rockton, Ill. (Hononegah) |
| 63 | Noah Howard | OL | 6-5 | 305 | R-Jr | RS | Clinton, Iowa (Clinton / Iowa Central College) |
| 12 | Akili Hubbard | SAF | 6-2 | 195 | R-Jr | TR | Bellflower, Calif. (Bellflower / Univ. of Kansas) |
| 86 | Jamal Jeffers | WR | 5-11 | 185 | Sr | 1 | Oklahoma City, Okla. (Putnam City North / Northeastern Oklahoma A&M) |
| 94 | Alton Jefferson | DL | 6-0 | 290 | Sr | 3 | Louisville, Ky. (Trinity) |
| 52 | Jamari Johnson | DL | 6-4 | 255 | R-Jr | 1 | Chicago, Ill. (De La Salle Institute) |
| 69 | Kwan Johnson | OL | 6-1 | 310 | Fr | HS | Blue Island, Ill. (Dwight D. Eisenhower) |
| 67 | Rahfeeq Katumbusi | OL | 6-3 | 320 | Fr | HS | Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mt. Carmel) |
| 32 | Ryan Kilburg | SAF | 6-0 | 200 | R-Jr | TR | Park Ridge, Ill. (Maine South / Western Michigan Univ.) |
| 9 | Tre'jon Lewis | DL | 6-4 | 285 | R-Sr | 2 | Manor, Texas (Manor / Texas Tech Univ.) |
| 35 | Zeke Lewis | RB | 6-0 | 210 | R-Jr | SQ | Decatur, Ill. (Decatur St. Teresa) |

#WeNotMe #EIUBLEEDBLUE 2023 EASTERN ILLINOIS PANTHER FOOTBALL

# 2024 EIU PANTHERS ROSTER (alphabetical)

| # | NAME | POS | HT | WT | YR | | HOMETOWN (HIGH SCHOOL/JC) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | Keshawn Lewis-Hunt | LB | 6-0 | 220 | Fr | HS | Chicago, Ill. (Morgan Park) |
| 38 | Max Loveall | WR | 6-4 | 195 | Fr | HS | Richmond, Ill. (Richmond-Burton) |
| 20 | Kaleb Lyons | DB | 5-11 | 185 | Jr | TR | Antioch, Tenn. (Brentwood Academy / Morehead State Univ.) |
| 77 | Sandro Malicevic | OL | 6-5 | 315 | So | TR | Saratoga, Calif. (Prospect / San Jose City College) |
| 11 | Anthony Manaves | TE | 6-4 | 230 | R-Sr | 4 | Chicago, Ill. (St. Patrick) |
| 43 | Chase McConnell | TE | 6-5 | 220 | Fr | HS | Lebanon, Tenn. (Watertown) |
| 82 | Joe McNab | TE | 6-6 | 255 | R-Jr | 1 | Madison Heights, Mich. (Lamphere) |
| 57 | Panayiotis Mihalopoulos | OL | 6-3 | 310 | R-Fr | RS | Chicago, Ill. (Loyola Academy) |
| 7 | Eli Mirza | WR | 5-11 | 195 | Sr | 1 | Sacramento, Calif. (Monterey Trail / Sierra College) |
| 2 | CJ Nelson | WR | 5-11 | 175 | R-So | TR | North Richland Hills, Texas (Richland / Univ. of Houston) |
| 91 | Nicholas Oliveira-Chace | DL | 6-4 | 275 | Sr | 1 | Cambridge, Mass. (Cambridge Rindge & Latin School / Franklin Pierce Univ.) |
| 51 | Payton Orth | LB | 5-11 | 220 | Sr | 3 | Frankfort, Ill. (Lincoln-Way East) |
| 71 | Sebastian Pares | OL | 6-6 | 310 | R-Sr | 1 | Joliet, Ill. (Wheaton Academy / Univ. of Sioux Falls) |
| 48 | Julian Patino | K | 5-10 | 200 | R-Jr | 1 | Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mt. Carmel) |
| 21 | Jay Pearson | RB | 6-0 | 210 | R-So | 1 | McKees Rocks, Pa. (Sto-Rox Junior-Senior) |
| 90 | Trevon Piggee-Blake | DL | 6-1 | 290 | R-Fr | RS | St. Louis, Mo. (DeSmet Jesuit) |
| 33 | Jack Pilson | LB | 6-0 | 225 | R-Sr | 1 | Mattoon, Ill. (Mattoon / Lehigh Univ.) |
| 61 | Ruben Popoca | K | 5-11 | 180 | R-Fr | RS | Mundelein, Ill. (Carmel Catholic) |
| 19 | Phoenix Porter | LB | 6-1 | 220 | R-Jr | 2 | Fairfield, Ohio (Fairfield) |
| 50 | Jerrad Price | DL | 6-3 | 300 | Grad | TR | Spurlockville, W.Va. (Lincoln County / Univ. of Charleston) |
| 15 | Malik Rainey | DB | 5-11 | 190 | R-Jr | 1 | Chicago, Ill. (Bolingbrook / Univ. of Cincinnati) |
| 84 | Jeremy Reeves | WR | 6-4 | 190 | Fr | HS | Chicago, Ill. (Gary Comer College Prep) |
| 9 | Aaron Rice | WR | 6-5 | 200 | R-So | 1 | Farmington Hills, Mich. (North Farmington) |
| 40 | Isaiah Richardson | SAF | 6-5 | 210 | R-Fr | RS | Suwanee, Ga. (Collins Hill) |
| 80 | Quenton Rogers | WR | 6-2 | 190 | R-Fr | RS | Mahomet-Seymour, Ill. (Mahomet-Seymour) |
| 19 | Jacob Rosenstiel | QB | 6-4 | 210 | Fr | HS | Boerne, Texas (Geneva School of Boerne) |
| 97 | Tray Ross | DL | 6-4 | 230 | Fr | HS | Danville, Ind. (Danville Community) |
| 47 | Drew Schiller | K | 6-1 | 170 | Fr | HS | New Lenox, Ill. (Lincoln-Way Central) |
| 25 | Christopher Sharp | CB | 5-11 | 180 | R-Fr | RS | St. Louis, Mo. (DeSmet Jesuit) |
| 64 | Connor Shelby | OL | 6-4 | 280 | Fr | HS | Mt. Carmel, Ill. (Mt. Carmel) |
| 5 | Anthony Shockey | LB | 6-1 | 230 | R-Sr | 3 | Lombard, Ill. (Glenbard East) |
| 96 | Cody Silzer | DL | 6-3 | 260 | R-So | SQ | Lockport, Ill. (Lockport Township) |
| | Cole Silzer | DL | 6-3 | 280 | R-So | SQ | Lockport, Ill. (Lockport Township) |
| 92 | Colby Smith | DL | 6-0 | 300 | Sr | 2 | Dunnellon, Fla. (Dunnellon, Fla. / Dodge City CC) |
| 6 | DeAirious Smith | WR | 5-11 | 185 | Sr | 4 | Lexington, Ky. (Lexington Christian Academy) |
| 53 | King Smith | DL | 6-3 | 315 | Fr | HS | Decatur, Ill. (Decatur MacArthur) |
| 78 | Joseph Solomon | OL | 6-5 | 295 | R-Jr | TR | Indianapolis, Ind. (Bishop Chatard / Appalachian State Univ.) |
| 8 | Joey Sprinkle | QB | 6-4 | 220 | Jr | TR | Monticello, Ill. (Monticello / St. Ambrose Univ.) |
| 88 | Jordan Sprycha | TE | 6-4 | 240 | Grad | TR | Oak Lawn, Ill. (Oak Lawn / McKendree Ill.) |
| 34 | Jordyn Stewart | LB | 6-0 | 230 | Fr | HS | Homewood, Ill. (Homewood-Flossmoor) |
| 56 | Christian Takatch | DL | 6-3 | 245 | So | TR | Sunbury, Ohio (Big Walnut / Notre Dame College) |
| 72 | Elkhanan Tanelus | OL | 6-2 | 320 | Grad | 4 | Naples, Fla. (Barron Collier) |
| 45 | Caden Tellenson | LB | 5-11 | 220 | R-Fr | RS | Redondo Beach, Calif. (Redondo Union) |
| 11 | Elijawah Tolbert | LB | 6-1 | 230 | Sr | 3 | Country Club Hills, Ill. (Hillcrest) |
| 24 | Collin Tyson | DB | 6-0 | 195 | R-Jr | 2 | Kansas City, Mo. (Platte County R-3) |
| 66 | Jack Valente | OL/LS | 6-5 | 320 | Sr | 3 | Batavia, Ill. (Batavia) |
| 95 | Drake Van Hyfte | DL | 6-4 | 280 | R-Jr | 2 | Annawan, Ill. (Annawan-Wethersfield) |
| 44 | Luke Wagner | DL | 6-4 | 240 | R-Jr | 1 | Washington, Pa. (McGuffey / Santa Barbara City College) |
| 55 | Drew Wilder | OL | 6-3 | 305 | R-Jr | 1 | Williamsburg, Va. (Jamestown / Iowa Western CC) |
| 41 | Peyton Wilkerson | DL | 6-1 | 250 | R-Fr | RS | Mokena, Ill. (Lincoln-Way Central) |
| 12 | Collin Willard | WR | 5-11 | 200 | Fr | HS | North Olmsted, Ohio (North Olmsted) |
| 13 | Cooper Willman | WR | 6-1 | 205 | R-Jr | 3 | Sterling, Ill. (Sterling) |
| 26 | Makhi Wilson | SAF | 6-0 | 185 | R-Fr | RS | Bettendorf, Iowa (Pleasant Valley) |
| 15 | Connor Wolf | QB | 6-3 | 205 | Fr | HS | Ada, Mich. (Grand Rapids Central Catholic) |
| 31 | Johnovan Wysinger | WR | 6-1 | 170 | Fr | HS | Chicago, Ill. (Morgan Park) |
| 29 | Kendi Young | RB | 5-11 | 210 | Sr | 3 | Calumet City, Ill. (Thornton Fractional North) |

# 2024 EASTERN ILLINOIS PANTHER PROFILES

## 14 -- Akin Adigun

**Safety • 6-3 • 185 • RS-Freshman**
**Little Elm, Texas (Lone Star HS)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in three games on special teams during the 2023 season.. did not record any statistics... used redshirt season under NCAA participation rule...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played safety for coach Jeff Rayburn at Lone Star High School… as a senior was a first team All-District 6-5A Division I selection… finished season with 67 tackles including two interceptions and two forced fumbles… team posted a 9-3 record during both junior and senior seasons advancing to second round of state playoffs both years… also lettered in track…

## 2 -- Mark Aitken

**Defensive Back • 5-9 • 180 • 5th Year**
**Chicago, Ill. (Kenwood Academy / Northern Illinois Univ.)**



**2022 - 2nd Team All-OVC (Kick Returner)**

**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2023 (SENIOR):** Appeared in all 11 games making ten starts at safety... team captain... finished season with 41 tackles including 31 solo stops, both totals ranking fourth on the team... season high eight tackles at Bowling Green... had one tackles for loss in road win at Lindenwood... had a forced fumble in road win at Northwestern State... had lone interception of the season in Mid-America Classic win over Illinois State with interception coming in the end zone... as a kick returner had 18 returns for 347 yards (19.3 average)... season long return was 52 yards at Lindenwood...

**2022 (JUNIOR):** Played in nine games during the 2022 season making four starts... earned second team All-Ohio Valley Conference honors at kick returner after ranking second in the league in kick return average at 24.0 yards per return... had a long return of 80 yards against Northwestern State... scored on a 65-yard return of a blocked field goal against Tennessee Tech... for the season made four starts with two at safety and two at corner... finished year with 17 total tackles including 14 solo stops... season high five tackles against Northwestern State which included a tackle for loss... had one interception in win at Murray State adding two pass break-ups for the year...

**2021 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games during the 2021 season making eight starts... had two starts at safety and six starts at corner... finished year with 21 tackles including 13 solo stops... made a season high five tackles, all solo, against Illinois State... first career start was at SEC member South Carolina finishing with three tackles.. had four pass break-ups to rank third on the team in passes defended... had two break-ups at Murray State and two break-ups at Austin Peay... had 2.5 tackles for loss with one tackle for loss against Tennessee State (sack) and one at Austin Peay...

**2020 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Transfer from Northern Illinois University who joined program in spring of 2021 but did not participate in Eastern Illinois games in the spring due to NCAA transfer rules...

**MARK AITKEN (cont.)...**

**NORTHERN ILLINOIS:** Did not participate in any games during the 2020 fall semester as NIU went 0-6 during COVID-19 shortened season... as a freshman in 2019 started season opener against Illinois State making five tackles with a pass break-up.. suffered season-ended injury in practice following season opener...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at Kenwood Academy earning four varsity letters as a two-way player... twice named honorable mention All-State, All-Area and All-Public League... named team MVP as a junior and senior... as a senior scored 19 total touchdowns with 10 rushing TDs, five TD receptions and four kick return TDs... made 20 tackles with two interceptions, a forced fumble, nine pass break-ups and two interceptions... team posted an 8-2 record as a senior...

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR AITKEN ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SK | PBU | KR Yds |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019 *(NIU)* | 1/1 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | |
| 2020 | *Did not play during COVID season (Fall at NIU / Spring at EIU)* | | | | | | | |
| 2021 *(EIU)* | 11/8 | 13 | 8 | 21 | 2.5 | 1 | 4 | |
| 2022 *(EIU)* | 9/4 | 14 | 3 | 17 | 1.0 | 0 | 2 | 17 (408) |
| 2023 *(EIU)* | 11/10 | 31 | 10 | 41 | 1.0 | 0 | 1 | 18 (347) |
| **Career** | **42/23** | **63** | **21** | **84** | **4.5** | **1** | **8** | **21.6avg** |

## 89 -- Daniel Ajose

**Wide Receiver • 6-6 • 215 • Freshman**
**Akron, Ohio (St. Vincent-St. Mary's HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Two-way player for coach Terry Cistone at St. Vincent-St. Mary's HS in Akron, Ohio where he was rated the No. 14 prospect in the Akron area… as a junior helped lead team to an 8-5 record as they advanced to the third round of the Ohio Division II Region 5 playoffs… played both wide receiver and defensive end in high school…as a senior finished with more than 350 yards receiving on offense… on defense had six tackles for loss and four quarterback hurries…

## 83 -- David Ajose

**Wide Receiver • 6-5 • 225 • Freshman**
**Akron, Ohio (St. Vincent-St. Mary's HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Two-way player for coach Terry Cistone at St. Vincent-St. Mary's HS in Akron, Ohio where he was rated the No. 15 prospect in the Akron area… as a junior helped lead team to an 8-5 record as they advanced to the third round of the Ohio Division II Region 5 playoffs… played both wide receiver and defensive end in high school… as a senior finished with more than 400 yards receiving and four touchdowns on offense… on defense recorded five sacks and seven tackles for loss… added a blocked punt returned for touchdown on special teams…

## 4 -- Moses Alexander

**Defensive Back • 6-3 • 195 • RS-Junior**
**Galveston, Texas (Ball HS / Univerity of Houston)**



**HOUSTON:** Was a two-year member of the Houston football team… played in eight games during the 2023 season finishing year with 11 tackles… had a season high four tackles with a tackle for loss against Texas Tech… added two tackles in last season games against both Oklahoma State and UCF adding one pass break-up against UCF… redshirted 2022 season at Houston…

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Played two seasons at Kilgore College with the 2020 COVID season and 2021 campaign… rated at 3-Star prospect by 247Sports… listed as No. 6 rated overall JUCO prospect and No. JUCO corner… 2021 Southwest Junior College Football First Team… played in ten games in 2021 finishing with 21 tackles, five break-ups and one interception… played in eight games in 2020 finishing with 14 tackles and two pass break-ups…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Was a two-year varsity letter winner at Galveston Ball HS… as a senior 14 tackles with two interceptions…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR ALEXANDER ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | INT | PBU |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 *(UH)* | *Redshirted season at Houston* | | | | | | |
| 2023 *(UH)* | 8/0 | 8 | 3 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

## 68 -- Matthew Allen

**Offensive Line • 6-8 • 300 • RS-Freshman**
**Bourbonnais, Ill. (Bradley-Bourbonnais HS)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during 2023 season... used redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played tight end for coach Mike Kohl at Bradley-Bourbonnais High School… helped team post a 5-5 record advancing to the IHSA Class 7A state playoffs… had ten receptions for 108 yards... earned South West Suburban Conference honors… Academic All-State… also lettered in basketball… father Scott played football at University of Illinois…

## 62 -- Brennan Anderson

**Offensive Line • 6-5 • 345 • RS-Junior**
**Dallas Center, Iowa (Dallas Center-Grimes HS / Iowa Western CC)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season... used redshirt season...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Was a two-year member of the Iowa Western CC football program helping them win the NJCAA National Championship in 2022… blocked for an offensive unit that averaged 31.3 points per game with 354.8 yards per game of total offense (200.8 rushing yards per game)… in 2021 blocked for an offensive unit that averaged 357.1 yards per game of total offense with 224.2 yards per game passing… team posted a 10-1 record losing in the NJCAA National Championship game…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at Dallas Center-Grimes HS… helped team post a 9-2 record in 2019 advancing to the second round of the Iowa Class 3A playoffs…

## 79 -- Rasheed Anderson

**Offensive Line • 6-5 • 355 • RS-Sophomore**
**Oak Park, Ill. (Fenwick HS)**



**2023 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Did not play in any games during the 2022 season using redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played offensive and defensive line for coach Matt Battaglia at Fenwick HS in Oak Park… helped lead team to a 12-2 record as a senior including winning the IHSA Class 5A State Championship… paved the way for a balanced offensive unit that averaged 39.4 points per game and 464 yards per contest… named All-Chicago Catholic League selection…

## 60 -- Aidan Archibald

**Defensive Line • 6-2 • 255 • Freshman**
**Charleston, Ill. (Charleston HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played senior season for Coach Brian Halsey at Charleston High School… helped team reach second round of IHSA Class 4A State Playoffs… earned All-State honors… first team All-Apollo Conference starting on defensive line… also played tight end… on defense had 98 tackles with 21 tackles for loss… selected for 2024 Shrine Game… earned varsity letters in both football and baseball… named Defensive MVP of Illinois High School Shrine Game...

**Misc.:** Father Bryan Archibald played football at Southern Illinois and was named to Salukis All-Century team… mother Tara Archibald played softball at Southern Illinois and is the former head softball coach at Eastern Illinois (now associate HC at Texas Tech)…

## 70 -- Alejandro Arellano

**Offensive Line • 6-3 • 305 • RS-Sophomore**
**Sterling, Ill. (Sterling HS / College of DuPage)**



**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Was a two-year member of the College of DuPage program… earned first team NJCAA All-American honors at offensive line in 2023 as a redshirt freshman… made 12 starts at right guard for NJCAA National Championship team… blocked for an offensive unit that ranked first in JUCO in points, points per game, total offense and rushing touchdowns… team ranked second in the nation in passing yards, passing touchdowns and rushing yards… earned NJCAA All-Academic honors as a freshman in 2022…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at Sterling High School earning Academic All-State honors… was a two-time first team All-Western Big Six Conference selection… helped team win 2021 COVID spring conference championship…

## 75 -- Jonathan Arellano

**Offensive Line • 6-3 • 310 • RS-Junior**
**Lancaster, Calif. (Bishop Alemany HS / College of the Canyons)**



**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2023 (RS-SOPHOMORE):** Appeared in nine games as a reserve offensive lineman seeing time at tackle... also played on special teams units for field goal and extra point... blocked for an offensive unit that ranked 25th in the FCS in passing offense and was third in the OVC in total offense averaging 373 yards per game...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Transferred to EIU in the spring of 2022... played in final two games of the regular season making two starts at left tackle against nationally ranked teams Southeast Missouri and UT Martin... used NCAA redshirt season based on game participation...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Played one season at College of the Canyons… team posted an 8-3 record in 2021 reaching the CCCAA playoff quarterfinals… blocked for an offense that averaged 29.7 points per game and 406 yards of total offense per game…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Offensive lineman that played at Bishop Alemany HS… was a first team All-Mission League selection… helped team post a 4-1 record during shortened 2020-21 spring COVID-19 season… team captain…

## 0 -- Ira Armstead II

**Linebacker • 6-4 • 240 • Senior**
**South Bend, Ind. (Adams HS / Univ. of Virginia)**



**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in ten games during the 2023 season making two starts at the Nickel position... had starts against Bowling Green and Lindenwood... finished season with 18 tackles including 11 solo stops... had two sacks with one each against McNeese and Bryant... added a tackle for loss at Bowling Green... season high six tackles in season opening shutout win over Indiana State... credited with three quarterback hurries...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Transferred to Eastern Illinois in Spring of 2022 as a quarterback, moved to wide receiver during fall camp and transitioned to a defensive back late in the season... versatile athlete that became the first EIU player to play on both sides of the ball in a game in several years... as an offensive player had one rush for five yards against Northwestern State... had eight kick returns for an average of 21.4 yards per game with a long return of 42 yards against Lindenwood... made four starts at corner with first start against Lindenwood... finished year with seven tackles, five solo stops...

**VIRGINIA:** Was a two-year member of Cavaliers team… in 2021 appeared in nine games… rushed 12 times for 49 yards during the season… was 0-for-2 in passing situations… added two receptions for six yards… … in 2020 appeared in four of first five games before suffering a season ending injury… collegiate debut was against Duke catching one pass for five yards… rushed six times for 46 yards with a touchdown against Wake Forest… rushed four times for 22 yards at No. 11 Miami before suffering injury…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Attended Adams HS playing quarterback and safety… back-to-back first-team All-NIC selection… passed for 1,078 yards and seven touchdowns as a senior while rushing for 610 yards and nine touchdowns… passed for 2,202 yards and 12 touchdowns with 1,104 rushing yards and 17 touchdowns as a junior… rated a 3-star recruit by ESPN.com and 247sports.com…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR ARMSTEAD ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | C-A-Int | PCT | YARDS | TDs | RUSH | YDs | TDs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 (VA) | 3/0 | 1-3-0 | 33.3 | 9 | 0 | 10 | 68 | 1 |
| 2021 (VA) | 4/0 | 0-2-0 | 000 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 49 | 0 |
| **Career** | **7/0** | **1-5-0** | **20.0** | **9** | **9** | **22** | **117** | **1** |

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | PBU | OTHER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 (EIU) | 8/4 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 21.4 KR Avg. |
| 2023 (EIU) | 10/2 | 11 | 7 | 18 | 2.5 | 0 | 2 Sacks |
| **Career** | **18/6** | **16** | **9** | **25** | **2.5** | **0** | **-----** |

## 6 -- Joel Barrows

**Defensive Line • 6-3 • 240 • RS-Senior**
**Chicago, Ill. (Brooks Prep)**



**2023 - 2nd Team All-Big South/OVC (Defensive Line)**

**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in all 11 games during the 2023 season making ten starts at defensive end... earned second team All-Big South/OVC Football honors at defensive line... finished year with 32 tackles with 15 solo stops... ranked second on the team with four sacks with solo sacks against Northwestern State, UT Martin and Tennessee State... was fifth on team with 5.5 tackles for loss... season high 1.5 tackles for loss in home win over Tennessee State... had season high five tackles, all solo against UT Martin... had three forced fumbles for the season which ranked 14th in the FCS... created forced fumbles at Northwestern State, UT Martin and Bryant... part of EIU defense that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained for season... added a fumble recovery against Indiana State and had five quarterback hurries...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in ten games during the 2022 season making two starts... finished season tied for team lead with three sacks coming in three straight games against Northwestern State, Lindenwood and Tennessee State... had 27 tackles for the season with 15 solo stops... season high four tackles in five different games, last against nationally ranked Southeast Missouri... had five tackles for loss for the year with one in five different games... had a forced fumble against Lindenwood...

**2021 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Did not play in any games during the season missing entire year due to injury...

**2020 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Appeared in five games during the 2020 season played during the spring of 2021... made seven tackles on defense with a high of three against Jacksonville State... had a half tackle for loss at Murray State... had a tackle for loss against Jacksonville State... added a quarterback hurry at UT Martin...

**2019 (FRESHMAN):** Did not play in any games during 2019 season using redshirt year...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played wide receiver and defensive back for coach Ben McCall at Gwendolyn Brooks College Prep in Chicago… helped team post a 7-4 record as a senior advancing to the IHSA Class 5A State playoffs, the first winning season and playoff appearance for the school since 2013… on defense registered 43 tackles with eight sacks and six forced fumbles… was team's top receiving threat finishing with 23 receptions, 315 yards and six touchdowns… was a two-time All-Chicago Public League Illini-Heartland Division selection… team captain…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR BARROWS...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SK | FF |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019 | Redshirted season at EIU | | | | | | |
| 2020 | 5/0 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 1.5 | 1 | 0 |
| 2021 | Missed season due to injury | | | | | | |
| 2022 | 10/2 | 15 | 12 | 27 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| 2023 | 11/10 | 15 | 17 | 32 | 5.5 | 4 | 3 |
| **Career** | **26/12** | **32** | **34** | **66** | **12** | **8** | **4** |

## 27 -- Allen Brown III

**Defensive Back • 5-11 • 180 • Freshman**
**St. Louis, Mo. (Eureka HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Jacob Sumner at Eureka HS in the St. Louis Metro area… rated the No. 3 defensive back in Missouri by Six Star Football… was a multi-faceted player ranking as the team's leading receiver and kick returner as a junior on a team that finished 9-2… had 25 receptions for 379 yards and three touchdowns… on defense had four interceptions… as a senior increased those offensive numbers finished with 54 receptions for 812 yards… ranked third in St. Louis Metro area in return yards as a senior with 630… added six interceptions on defense as team was 8-4 reaching Missouri Class 5 state quarterfinals… earned first team Missouri All-State…

## 27 -- Josh Brown

**Safety • 6-1 • 195 • Freshman**
**Suwanee, Ga. (Peachtree Ridge HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Matt Helmerich at Peachtree Ridge HS… earned second team All-Region 7-7A as a senior… as a senior had 73 tackles with 51 solo stops… added two interceptions and five pass break-ups… helped lead team to a 10-win season as a senior… posted 73 tackles with 42 solo stops as a junior… earned varsity letters in both football and baseball…

## 5 -- Surahz Buncom

**Wide Receiver • 6-3 • 175 • RS-Freshman**
**Chula Vista, Calif. (Mater Dei Catholic HS / Univ. of Kansas)**



**KANSAS:** Was a member of Kansas football program during 2023 season as a freshman but did not appear in any games using redshirt year based on NCAA participation rule…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at Mater Dei Catholic HS for coach John Joyner… caught 30 passes for 467 yards and nine touchdowns as a senior… helped lead team to 13-0 record and California Open Division State Championship… rated a 3-star recruit by Rivals and 247 Sports…

**MISC.:** Brother Frank Buncom IV played at Stanford… grandfather Frank Buncom Jr., played seven years in the AFL at linebacker with the San Diego Chargers and Cincinnati Bengals, elected to Chargers Hall of Fame…

# 2024 EASTERN ILLINOIS PANTHER PROFILES

## 76 -- Bryce Burnett

**Offensive Line • 6-4 • 295 • RS-Sophomore**
**Danville, Ill. (Westville HS)**



**2023 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Missed entire 2023 season due to injury...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Played in four games during the 2022 season... saw first action of the year at Tennessee State and made one start at left guard at McNeese... blocked for an offensive unit that had 295.5 yards of total offense per game... able to take redshirt year under NCAA participation rule...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played both offensive and defensive line for coach Guy Goodlove at Westville HS… during COVID-19 shortened 2021 spring season finished with 15 tackles, four tackles for loss and three sacks in five games played… named to News-Gazette All-Area Special Mention as a junior… as a senior earned All-Vermilion Valley Football Conference honors on defense… helped lead team to a 7-3 record as a senior as team made the IHSA Class 2A playoffs… defensive unit allowed just 12 points per game during senior season… team captain…

## 3 -- NiJhay Burt

**Defensive Back • 5-11 • 185 • Junior**
**Munhall, Pa. (Steel Valley HS)**



**2023 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games as a special teams starter and key reserve defensive back... finished season with 16 tackles making 12 solo stops... opened season with an interception returned 67 yards for a touchdown, which ranked as the 10th longest interception return for touchdown in program history... added two more interceptions against UT Martin and Lindenwood to rank second on the team with three interceptions... part of an EIU defense that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained for the season.. added a blocked punt on against Tennessee State that he recovered inside the 10-yard line... season high four tackles in Mid-America Classic win over Illinois State...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Played in eight games during the 2022 season seeing time on special teams units... made three tackles, all solo for the season... had two tackles at Tennessee State... other tackle came against Northwestern State...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at Steel Valley HS… was the leading rusher in the WPAIL as a senior with more than 2,000 yards and 35 rushing touchdowns… helped carry team into the Class 2A playoffs before suffering a season ending injury… a two-way stand out player he was named the Allegheny Conference Offensive and Defensive Player of the Year as a senior… named an All-State selection at running back…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR BURT ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | PBU | INT | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 8/0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| 2023 | 11/0 | 12 | 4 | 16 | 1 | 1 | 3 | INT TD |
| **Career** | **19/0** | **15** | **4** | **19** | **1** | **1** | **3** | **-----** |

## 20 -- Chris Caldwell

**Running Back • 5-10 • 190 • Sophomore**
**O'Fallon, Ill. (O'Fallon HS / Western Kentucky Univ.)**



**WESTERN KENTUCKY:** Went through spring 2024 football practice at Western Kentucky University after spending the 2023 fall season playing at Wisconsin Whitewater…

**WISCONSIN WHITEWATER:** Played in the final regular season game rushing for ten yards in win over Wisconsin Eau Claire… team posted an 11-2 overall record reaching the NCAA Division III playoff quarterfinals…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at O'Fallon High School rushing for 1,693 yards during junior and senior seasons with 19 touchdowns earning All-Conference honors…

## 59 -- Liam Carr

**Linebacker • 6-0 • 225 • RS-Sophomore**
**Okemos, Mich. (Okemos HS / Michigan State Univ.)**



**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2023 (SOPHOMORE):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season...

**MICHIGAN STATE:** Was a walk-on with the football program during the 2021 season, did not appear in any games...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at Okemos High School... was a first team All-Conference selection... team captain...

## 46 -- Nico Carrier

**Kicker • 5-9 • 170 • Freshman**
**Naperville, Ill. (Metea Valley HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach John Parpet at Metea Valley HS… played both wide receiver and kicker as a senior… as a wide receiver hauled in 20 passes for 169 yards… during senior year knocked home five field goals during the season… performing at Vegas 42 Kicking Camp connected on 5-of-5 on field goals on distances of 40, 45, 50, 52 and 55…

## 37 -- Grady Catanzano

**Linebacker • 6-1 • 220 • Freshman**
**Mt. Prospect, Ill. (Prospect HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Dan DeBouef at Prospect HS… earned All-Area honors… finished senior season with 22 tackles for loss… had five forced fumbles and six quarterback sacks… helped team post an 8-3 record advancing to the second round of the IHSA Class 7A state playoffs… team won nine games during junior season again advancing to IHSA Class 7A second round…

## 73 -- Clint Chamley

**Offensive Line • 6-5 • 310 • Freshman**
**Kahoka, Mo. (Clark County HS)**

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Ethan Allen at Clark County HS… earned second team All-State honors in as a junior in 2022… once again earned All-State honors as a senior with third team accolades despite missing four games due to injury… blocked for an offensive unit that scored 50 or more points in a game five times in the last two seasons… helped lead team to second round of Missouri Class 2 state playoffs as a senior…

## 39 -- Tyler Clark

**Running Back • 5-10 • 205 • RS-Junior**
**Chicago, Ill. (Phillips HS)**



**2023 (RS-SOPHOMORE):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Did not appear in any games during the 2022 season...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Played in seven games seeing time on special teams unit... was a member of kickoff and kickoff return units... had three kick returns for 42 yards during the season... long return of 18 yards at Austin Peay...

**2020 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in one game during the 2020 season played during the spring of 2021... had one carry for one yard against Jacksonville State... did not record any additional statistics...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Troy McAllister at Phillips HS... helped team post an 11-2 record as a senior with team advancing to the third round of the IHSA Class 7A state playoffs... rushed for more than 500 yards as a senior with seven touchdowns... first team Chicago Public League team...

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR CLARK ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | RUSH | YDS | TD | LNG | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 | 1/0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | |
| 2021 | 7/0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14.0 KR Avg |
| 2022 | | Redshirted year at EIU | | | | |
| 2023 | | Did not appear in any games | | | | |
| **Career** | **8/0** | **1** | **1** | **0** | **1** | **-----** |

## 1 -- Nick Coates

**Nickel • 5-10 • 190 • Senior**
**Louisville, Ky. (Male HS)**



**2022 - 2nd Team All-OVC (Nickel)**

**2023: (JUNIOR):** Named to preseason Big South-OVC Football Assocation preseason players to watch list... played in all 11 games during the 2023 season making nine starts at the nickel position... finished season with 32 tackles including 19 solo stops... had a season high five tackles in season opening shutout win at Indiana State and at Southeast Missouri... finished year with 2.5 tackles for loss with a solo TFL at Indiana State and in home win over McNeese... had one interception in road win at Lindenwood... added four pass break-ups... part of a defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games during the 2022 season making nine starts at nickel... earned second team All-Ohio Valley Conference honors at Nickel... finished season ranked fourth on team with 67 tackles including 41 solo stops which was second most on the team... made a season high 12 tackles at McNeese (6 solo)... added a double figure tackle game with ten (nine solo) against Lindenwood... had 3.5 tackles for loss and a half sack coming at McNeese... had tackles for loss at Murray State and against Tennessee Tech... had a forced fumble against Northwestern State... added five pass break-ups...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Played in final eight games of the season as a member of special teams units... had three tackles on kickoff coverage making tackles in both Murray State games and against nationally ranked UT Martin...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football for coach Chris Wolfe at Louisville Male HS… named All-Area as a senior helping lead team to Kentucky Class 6A State Championship game… named first team All-State as a senior... as a senior helped lead team to a Kentucky State Class 6A state runner-up finish... made nine tackles in state championship game... as a junior helped lead team to Kentucky State runner-up finish… in state championship game finished with six tackles, two tackles for loss and one sack… team finished with a 14-1 record and was ranked as high as No. 11 in the USA Today Prep Top 25 poll… named All-Area as a junior… lettered in track competing in sprints, the long jump and triple jump… team captain…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR COATES ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | PBU | INT | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | 8/0 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| 2022 | 11/9 | 41 | 26 | 67 | 3.5 | 5 | 0 | 1 FF |
| 2023 | 11/9 | 19 | 13 | 32 | 2.5 | 4 | 1 | |
| **Career** | **30/18** | **62** | **40** | **102** | **6** | **9** | **1** | **----** |

# 2024 EASTERN ILLINOIS PANTHER PROFILES

## 36 -- Dillon Conway

**Safety • 6-3 • 210 • Freshman**
**Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mount Carmel HS**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Jordan Lynch at Chicago Mt. Carmel HS helping lead the team to a 13-1 record and IHSA Class 7A State Championship in 2023… team also posted a 14-0 record during junior season winning Class 7A title… part of defensive unit that allowed just 13.9 points per game during senior season… finished with four tackles, a half sack and pass break-up in state championship game…

## 16 -- Kevin Conway

**Quarterback • 6-2 • 210 • RS-Sophomore**
**New Lenox, Ill. (Providence Catholic HS / Diamond Football Academy)**



**2023 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Transferred to EIU in spring of 2022... played in one game during the 2022 season seeing time against Southeast Missouri... was 0-for-4 passing... had 11 yards rushing... used redshirt season under NCAA participation rule...

**PREP SCHOOL:** Attended Diamond Football Academy prep school in Happy, Texas for the fall of 2021…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played quarterback and safety for Providence Catholic HS… team was limited in games played as fall 2020 season was postponed to the spring of 2021… as a dual threat quarterback passed for more than 500 yards and rushed for more than 300 during shortened season… overcame injuries from earlier in prep career playing for head coach Mark Coglianese…

## 0 -- Cody Davidson

**Wide Receiver • 6-2 • 190 • Junior**
**Beaverton, Ore. (Beaverton HS / Santa Rosa JC)**



**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Played two seasons at Santa Rosa Junior College… during 2023 season appeared in ten games hauling in 70 passes for 1,033 yards and eight touchdowns… ranked fifth in all of California Junior College ranks in receiving yards per game at 103.3, while ranking third in total receptions… earned first team All-NorCal League honors… as a freshman in 2022 earned first team All-NorCal League honors playing in ten games… finished season with 50 receptions for 627 yards and six touchdowns…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Was a two-way player at Beaverton High School earning first team All-Metro League honors on both offense and defense as a senior… helped lead team to a 7-3 record and Oregon Class 6A state playoff appearance during final season…

## 7 -- Kiwaun Davis

**Defensive Back • 6-3 • 175 • RS-Freshman**
**Chicago, Ill. (Kenwood Academy / Northern Illinois Univ.)**

**NORTHERN ILLINOIS:** Went through spring 2024 football practice at Northern Illinois University after spending 2023 fall season at Washington State…

**WASHINGTON STATE:** Member of Washington State football program during 2023 fall season... did not appear in any games using redshirt year based on NCAA participation rule…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at Chicago Kenwood Academy earning IHSA Class 5A All-State honors as a junior making 39 tackles with two interceptions and five pass break-ups… named to Chicago Public League second team as a senior making 16 tackles with five interceptions and five pass break-ups… rated a 3-star prospect by ESPN.com, Rivals and 247Sports… rated No. 28 overall college prospect in Illinois…

## 54 -- Nic DiSanto

**Offensive Line • 6-4 • 320 • Freshman**
**Wyandotte, Mich. (Gabriel Richard HS)**



**2023 - 4th Team Freshman All-American (Phil Steele)**

**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Started nine games at offensive right tackle during the 2023 season... made collegiate debut with a start at FBS member Bowling Green in the second game of the season... earned 4th team Freshman All-America honors from Phil Steele... blocked for an offensive unit that had two individual 200-plus yard rushing performances during the season... offensive ranked 25th in the FCS in passing offense and third in the Big South/OVC in total offense at 373 yards per game...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played offensive and defensive line for coach Dionte Allen at Gabriel Richard High School… twice named a All-Detroit Catholic selection… first team All-Area… blocked for an offensive unit that averaged 33 points per game… team posted a 7-4 record advancing to the second round of the Michigan Division 8 state playoffs…

## 14 -- Blainey Dowling

**Quarterback • 6-2 • 200 • RS-Freshman**
**Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mount Carmel HS)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season... used redshirt season under NCAA participation rule...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played quarterback for coach Jordan Lynch at Chicago Mount Carmel High School… led team to the IHSA Class 7A State Championship posting a 14-0 record… was 205-of-290 for the season passing for 3,030 yards… added five rushing touchdowns… named Chicago Catholic League Tony Lawless MVP winner… first team All-Chicago Catholic League… named Player of the Year by Illinois Max Preps and Daily Southtown… a finalist for the Illinois Gatorade Player of the Year… earned first team All-State honors… rated a two-star recruit by Rivals.com…

## 22 -- Kaelin Drakeford

**Safety • 6-4 • 210 • Graduate Student**
**Harrodsburg, Ky. (Mercer County HS)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in ten games during the 2023 season making one start at safety in road win at Lindenwood... had 23 tackles with 19 solo stops during the season... had a season high five tackles (four solo) in home win over McNeese... also had five tackles (four solo) at FBS member Bowling Green... finished year with three tackles for loss with solo TFL against Indiana State, UT Martin and Tennessee State... had two fumble recoveries against Illinois State and UT Martin... part of defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained for the season... credited with four pass break-ups including two in final game road win at Robert Morris...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in four games during the 2022 season using redshirt season under NCAA participation rule... was hurt in season opener at Northern Illinois and returned to play three games late in the season... made starts in three of four games at safety... finished year with 17 tackles including ten solo stops... made a season high nine tackles against nationally ranked Southeast Missouri... had two pass break-ups with one each against Tennessee Tech and Southeast Missouri...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Played in 11 games making nine starts at safety during the 2021 season... finished year with 41 tackles including 26 solo stops... made a season high six tackles at Dayton... had five tackles in four different games - at South Carolina, at Tennessee Tech, UT Martin and at Austin Peay... had 2.5 tackles for loss for the year with 1.5 TFL against Illinois State... had a sack and forced fumble at SEC member South Carolina... finished season with three pass break-ups and one interception at Tennessee Tech...

**2020 (FRESHMAN):** Started all six games at safety during the 2020 season played in the spring of 2021... finished third on the team with 38 tackles while 28 solo tackles ranked second on the team... made season high eight tackles (seven solo) at Murray State... added seven tackle (six solo) performance against Jacksonville State... had a half tackle for loss at UT Martin and a half sack in home win over Tennessee Tech... had a forced fumble in season opener against Southeast Missouri... added two pass break-ups coming against Murray State and Jacksonville State...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach David Buchanan at Mercer County HS… played quarterback and safety as a senior leading team to an 8-3 record and appearance in the Kentucky Class 3A state playoffs… at quarterback passed for 832 yards and seven touchdowns while rushing for 395 yards and six scores… on defense finished the season with 67 tackles including four interceptions and one tackle for loss… two-time All-State selection at safety as a junior and senior…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR DRAKEFORD ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | PBU | INT | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 | 6/6 | 28 | 8 | 36 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 FF |
| 2021 | 11/9 | 26 | 15 | 41 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 SACK |
| 2022 *(*R)* | 4/3 | 10 | 7 | 17 | 0 | 2 | 0 | --- |
| 2023 | 10/1 | 19 | 4 | 23 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 2 FF |
| **Career** | **31/19** | **83** | **34** | **117** | **5** | **11** | **1** | **---** |

## 65 -- Carson Fichtel

**Offensive Line • 6-3 • 295 • RS-Sophomore**
**Heath, Texas (Rockwall-Heath HS)**



**2023 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Played in two games during the 2022 season... used redshirt season under NCAA participation rule... first collegiate appearance was against nationally ranked Southeast Missouri... made a start at center in final game of the season against nationally ranked UT Martin as team posted 426 yards of total offense, its second highest total of the year...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played offensive line at Rockwall-Heath HS for coach Mike Spradlin... anchored an offensive line that had back-to-back 11 win seasons… team advanced to the third round of the Texas 6A D2 state playoffs during senior season… team advanced t to the Regional Finals, quarterfinal round during junior… son of former EIU Hall of Fame offensive lineman Brad Fichtel… team captain…

## 28 -- Jacarre Fleming

**Running Back • 5-8 • 195 • Freshman**
**Hahira, Ga. (Lowndes HS)**

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Zach Grage at Lowndes High School in Valdosta, Ga… speed runner that also lettered in track running as part of Georgia Class 7A State Championship 4x100 relay team as a junior… on the football field finished senior season with more than 1,000 all-purpose yards and 12 touchdowns… rushed for more than 2,000 yards and 20 touchdowns in prep career… earned All-Region honors…

## 4 -- MJ Flowers

**Running Back • 6-1 • 220 • RS-Sophomore**
**Cincinnati, Ohio (Colerain HS)**



**2023-24 - EIU Male Newcomer of the Year**
**2023 - Runner-Up for Jerry Rice FCS Freshman of the Year Award**
**2023 - Big South/OVC Football Offensive Freshman of the Year**
**2023 - 1st Team Freshman All-American (Stats Perform, Phil Steele / FB Central / SI)**
**2023 - 1st Team All-Big South/OVC Football (Running Back)**

**2023 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Appeared in all 11 games starting final eight games of the season... finished as the runner-up for the Jerry Rice FCS Freshman of the Year Award... named Big South/OVC Football Offensive Freshman of the Year... named first team Freshman All-America by Stats Perform, Phil Steele and Football Central/SI... named first team All-Big South/OVC Football at running back... rushed for a team best 854 yards which was second nationally among FCS freshmen... had 1,046 all-purpose yards which was second nationally among FCS freshmen... had three games with 100 or more yards rushing... breakout performance was 272 yards on 37 carries with one touchdown in win over McNeese... earned FCS National Freshman of the Week honors for that performance... added a 201 yard rushing performance on 31 carries with four touchdowns in win over Tennessee State... closed out regular season with 179 yards on 31 carries and one score in road win at Robert Morris... was one of six players in the FCS with multiple 200-yard rushing games during the season and the only freshman to accomplish that feat... the 272 rushing yards against McNeese were the third best single game total in school history... the four rushing touchdowns against Tennessee State were tied for third most in a single game in school history (one of nine players in school history with four or more TDs in a game)... became just third running back in school history with two or more 200-yard rushing games in a season... was a multiple time Big South-OVC Offensive Player of the Week selection and multiple time Big South-OVC Freshman of the Week selection... added 35 receptions for 192 yards with the 35 receptions tied for third most on the team... ended regular season ranked 29th in the FCS in rushing yards and 38th in rushing touchdowns... led EIU in scoring with 48 points...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Played in four games during the 2022 season using redshirt season under NCAA participation rule... made collegiate debut against Tennessee State rushing for 36 yards on six carries... started against nationally ranked Southeast Missouri with 38 yards rushing... season high 43 yards on 12 carries against Tennessee Tech to finish season with 118 yards and a 3.7 yards per rush average...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played running back for coach Shawn Cutright at Colerain HS… rushed for 1,404 yards and 17 touchdowns during senior season averaging 7 yards per carry… named a first team All-Greater Miami Conference selection and to the Southwest District Division I second team… helped lead team to first round of Ohio D1 state playoffs… as a junior rushed for 865 yards and 14 touchdowns in nine games… team captain…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR FLOWERS ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | RUSH | YDS | TD | LNG | REC | YDS | TD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 (*R) | 4/1 | 32 | 118 | 0 | 22 | -- | -- | -- |
| 2023 | 11/8 | 157 | 854 | 8 | 65 | 35 | 192 | 0 |
| **Career** | **15/9** | **189** | **962** | **8** | **65** | **35** | **192** | **0** |

## 8 -- Tienne Fridge

**Safety • 6-2 • 210 • RS-Junior**
**Sacramento, Calif. (Elk Grove HS / Sacramento City College)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Appeared in first three games of the season seeing time on special teams and as a reserve defensive back... did not record any statistics... used redshirt season under NCAA participation rule...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Was a two-year member of the Sacramento City College football team… played in eight games during the 2022 season finishing year with 18 tackles including thee tackles for loss… added two interceptions, seven pass break-ups and a forced fumble… named Northern California Football Association National Division All-Valley League… had 13 tackles during the 2021 season with two interceptions and one pass break-up…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Was a standout defensive back at Elk Grove High School… as a senior had 41 tackles with ten pass break-ups earning All-Conference honors…

## 98 -- Brett Galetti

**Long Snapper / Def. Line • 6-1 • 230 • RS-Junior**
**Frankfort, Ill. (Lincoln-Way East)**



**2023 (SOPHOMORE):** Appeared in nine games during the 2023 season... was the long snapper on punt team for the early portion of the season and spent several games as both the long and short snapper for special teams... did not play in the final two games of the regular season...

**2022 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Was the back-up long snapper for the season making collegiate debut in the final game of the regular season at nationally ranked UT Martin... part of special teams unit that featured both the OVC first team punter and field goal kicker while ranking fifth in the FCS in net punting... OVC Academic Medal of Honor...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Joined EIU roster during fall semester and served as long snapper for scout team during 2021 season... used redshirt year...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Finished prep career at Lincoln-Way East HS... was a quarterback and long snapper in high schoool... began prep career at Ottawa HS and was a two-year starter at quarterback...

**Misc.:** Father played offensive line for coach Barry Alvarez at Wisconsin... mother ran track in college...

## 49 -- Jesse Garza

**Linebacker • 6-2 • 230 • RS-Junior**
**Nipomo, Calif. (Nipomo HS / Allan Hancock College)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in four games during the 2023 season... saw time on special teams unit and did not record any statistics... used redshirt season under NCAA participation rule...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Came to EIU following two years playing at Allan Hancock College in California... in 2022 was a second team All-National Northern League selection after leading the team with 72 tackles... had six tackles for loss with three forced fumbles and three pass break-ups... as a freshman in 2021 finished with 40 tackles with a sack and interception..

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Prepped at Nipomo HS earning PAC 4A League Defensive Player of the Year honors... averaged eight tackles per game last season with nine tackles for loss... also lettered in track and wrestling winning the 2018-19 CIF Central Section Division 4 title at the 195 pound weight class...

## 16 -- Zay Gentry

**Safety • 6-0 • 195 • Senior**
**Anna, Texas (Anna HS)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in nine games during the 2023 season seeing time as a starter on special teams and as a back-up defensive back... had three tackles during the year with single tackles at Indiana State, against Illinois State and at Robert Morris... had two kick returns during the season for a 16.5 yards per return average... long return was 23 yards against UT Martin...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in ten games during the 2022 season seeing time as a starter on special teams and as a back-up defensive back... had ten tackles on the year with nine solo stops... season high three tackles against Lindenwood... had two tackles against Northwestern State and Lindenwood... had a forced fumble against Tennessee Tech... had a fumble recovery against Southeast Missouri... had two pass break-ups, both against Lindenwood... served as the kick returner against Chattanooga with five returns for 72 yards, a 14.4 yards per return average...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Played in six games seeing time on special teams units... had one tackle in college debut at Murray State...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football for coach Jason Heath at Anna HS… skilled athlete that played a variety of positions for high school team including quarterback, wide receiver and safety… split time at quarterback as part of a three-player attack… on defense registered 42 tackles with four interceptions… projected to play defensive back at EIU… also lettered in basketball and track competing in sprints, long jump and triple jump…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR GENTRY ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | PBU | FR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | 6/0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2022 | 10/0 | 9 | 1 | 10 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| 2023 | 9/0 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Career** | **25/0** | **12** | **2** | **14** | **0** | **2** | **1** |

## 87 -- Alex Ginnever

**Tight End • 6-5 • 235 • RS-Sophomore**
**Wentzville, Mo. (Holt HS)**



**2023 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Suffered injury in preseason camp and missed the entire 2023 season...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Did not play in any games during the 2022 season, used redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played tight end and defensive end for coach Ethan Place at Holt HS… during senior season had 36 catches for 651 yards and seven touchdowns… helped lead team to a 13-1 record losing in the Missouri Class 5 state championship game… as a junior had 13 receptions for 369 yards and three touchdowns… as a sophomore had 15 receptions for 249 yards and two touchdowns… finished prep career with more than 1,200 yards receiving and five 100-yard receiving games… was a first team All-State selection as a senior…

## 1 -- Terrance Gipson

**Wide Receiver • 6-0 • 190 • Senior**
**Kingwood, Texas (Westfield HS / East Los Angeles College)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Suffered injury in preseason camp and missed entire 2023 season...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Was a one-year member of the East Los Angeles College football program… played quarterback during the 2022 season appearing in eight games… passed for 1,776 yards and 18 touchdowns while rushing for 401 yards and eight touchdowns… rushed for a season high 103 yards against Long Beach College… passed for a season high 295 yards against Saddleback College… played one season at Blinn College before time at East LA College…

**SMU:** Began college career at SMU going 6-for-6 for 86 yards passing while rushing for 56 yards and one touchdown in limited action… redshirted in 2019 seeing action in two games... appeared in four games during 2020 COVID-19 season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at Westfield HS missing a portion of senior year due to injury… was a three-star recruit by 247sports.com and Rivals.com… named preseason All-Greater Houston in 2018 before injury… passed for 2,000 yards and rushed for 500 yards as a junior with 26 touchdowns… led team to 11-1 record with Regional Semifinal appearance…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR GIPSON ...**

| YEAR | G | C-A-Int | PCT | YARDS | TDs | RUSH | YDs | TDs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019 *(SMU)* | 2 | 3-3-0 | 1.00 | 56 | 0 | 7 | 37 | 0 |
| 2020 (SMU) | 4 | 3-3-0 | 1.00 | 30 | 0 | 7 | 19 | 1 |
| 2023 *(EIU)* | | Missed season due to injury at EIU | | | | | | |
| **Career** | **6** | **6-6-0** | **1.00** | **86** | **0** | **14** | **56** | **1** |

## -- Taylor Goodson

**Safety • 5-10 • 205 • RS-Junior**
**Suwanee, Ga. (North Gwinnett HS / Iowa Western CC)**



**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2024 (JUNIOR):** Will miss 2024 due to injury...

**2023 (RS-SOPHOMORE):** Transferred to Eastern Illinois in fall of 2023 but did not play in any games...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Played the 2022 season at Iowa Western CC recording stats in six games... finished season with seven tackles including making one stop as IWCC won NJCAA National Championship game... helped team post 10-2 record during the year...

**MERCER:** Played in one game at Mercer during the COVID shortened 2020-21 season... redshirted at Mercer during 2021 season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Bill Stewat at North Gwinnett HS... helped lead team to 2017 Georgia Class 7A state championship... recorded 116 tackles over final three seasons... had three career sacks and six career interceptions, four coming in senior season... named 2019 Region Defensive Back of the Year... earned All-State and All-County honors...

**Misc.:** Younger brother of NFL running back Tyler Goodson...

## 85 -- Landers Green

**Wide Receiver • 6-3 • 190 • Junior**
**Wharton, NJ (St. Peter's Prep / Union College)**



**2023 - 2nd Team All-Liberty League (WR)**

**UNION COLLEGE:** Was a two-year member of the Union College football team… as a sophomore in 2023 earned second team All-Liberty League honors… played in 11 games leading team with 41 receptions for 663 yards and four touchdowns… ranked third in Liberty League in receiving yards and sixth in receptions… had a season-high 97 yards receiving on six receptions vs Montclair State… season high seven receptions against St. Lawrence… hauled in five passes for 75 yards and a touchdown in NCAA playoff opening round against Delaware Valley… played in four games in 2022 making one catch against Buffalo State… also a member of track & field team earning All-Region honors in indoor track in the high jump…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football and ran track at St. Peter's Prep… as a senior had 13 receptions for 151 yards and one touchdown… helped football team reach New Jersey Non-Public A state semifinals as a senior…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR GREEN ...**

| YEAR | G | RCPTs | YDs | YDs/REC | TDs | LONG |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 *(UC)* | 4 | 1 | 19 | 19.0 | 0 | 19 |
| 2023 *(UC)* | 11 | 41 | 663 | 16.2 | 4 | 56 |
| **Career *(UC)*** | **15** | **42** | **682** | **16.2** | **4** | **56** |

## 99 -- Jaron Hacha

**Defensive Line • 5-11 • 310 • Senior**
**Frankfort, Ill. (Lincoln-Way East HS)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in ten games during the 2023 season making two starts on the defensive line against Northwestern State and UT Martin... finished year with 18 tackles including nine solo stops... had one sack in season opening shutout win over Indiana State... had a solo tackle for loss against Illinois State and finished season with 2.5 tackles for loss... season high six tackles (five assisted) at Southeast Missouri... part of defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained for the year... credited with two quarterback hurries...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played ten games seeing time on both sides of the ball... started at defensive tackle in season opener at Northern Illinois making one tackle... during the season moved to offensive line seeing time primarily on field goal and punt team units... played extensively at left guard in final regular season game at nationally ranked UT Martin as team 426 yards of total offense, its second highest total of the season...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in eight games during the 2021 season making one start on the defensive line at Tennessee Tech... missed most of October with an injury, missing three games total... finished season with 14 tackles including eight solo stops... had two tackles in six games with two solo stops against Illinois State and Austin Peay... had 1.5 tackles for loss with a tackle for loss at Austin Peay and half tackle for loss in final regular season game against Murray State...

**2020 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in five games during the 2020 season played in the spring of 2021... made two starts at nose tackle... finished season with four tackles, three solo stops... had season high two tackles against Jacksonville State... had one tackle at UT Martin and one tackle at Tennessee State...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played defensive line for coach Rob Zvonar at Lincoln-Way East HS… helped lead team to a 14-0 record as a senior winning the IHSA Class 8A State Championship… recorded four tackles, a sack and two tackles for loss in the state championship game… finished the season with 59 tackles including 13 tackles for loss and six sacks… named an All-Area selection as a senior…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR HACHA ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | Sack |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 | 5/2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 2021 | 8/1 | 8 | 6 | 14 | 1.5 | 0 |
| 2022 | 10/1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 2023 | 10/2 | 9 | 9 | 18 | 2.5 | 1 |
| **Career** | **33/6** | **21** | **17** | **38** | **4.0** | **1** |

## 58 -- Isaiah Hare

**Defensive Line • 6-2 • 290 • Freshman**
**Mt. Washington, Ky. (Bullitt East HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Keegan Kendrick at Bullitt East HS in suburban Louisville, Ky… helped lead team to Kentucky Class 6A State Championship during junior season… missed part of senior season with injury but still set school record with 18 career sacks… played primarily as a defensive end but also played at defensive tackle during portion of season… earned All-State honors as a junior and senior… ranked in the top five defensive linemen in Kentucky…

## 74 -- Haven Hatfield

**Offensive Line • 6-3 • 295 • RS-Sophomore**
**Tuscola, Ill. (Tuscola HS)**



**2023 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2022 season using redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at Tuscola HS and was a multiple sport letterwinner including football, basketball and baseball… was an All-Area special mention as a senior… named unanimous first team All-Central Illinois Conference selection at offensive line as a senior after earning second team honors as a junior…

## 81 -- Alex Herrera

**Tight End • 6-2 • 240 • Junior**
**Linden, Calif. (Linden HS / College of the Sequoias)**



**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Played the 2023 season at College of the Sequoias… appeared in 11 games finishing season with 27 receptions for 311 yards with three touchdowns… had a season-high five catches against both Sierra College and Reedley… hauled in four passes for a season-high 64 yards and two touchdowns against Sacramento City… earned second team All-America honors by JCGRIDIRON… named Regional I First-team All-California… played 2022 season at San Joaquin Delta College appearing in seven games… had 11 receptions for 152 yards and four touchdowns… season high three catches for 43 yards and a touchdown against Contra Costa College…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at Linden HS… led team to a 7-5 record as a senior…passed for 2,331 yards and 16 touchdowns as a senior…

## 3 -- Pierce Holley

**Quarterback • 6-2 • 225 • Graduate Student**
**Arvada, Colo. (Lakewood HS / Georgetown Univ.)**



**2023 - 2nd Team All-Big South/OVC (QB)**
**2022 - 2nd Team All-Patriot League (QB)**

**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2024 (GRADUATE):** Named to preseason watch list for 2024 Walter Payton Award... named Big South/OVC Preseason Offensive Player of the Year...

**2023 (GRADUATE):** Transferred as a graduate student to EIU making 11 starts at quarterback... named second team All-Big South/OVC Football Association at quarterback... passed for 2,741 yards which ranks seventh on the EIU single list (trails only Jimmy Garoppolo, Sean Payton and Tony Romo on the list)... was 240-of-394 with 17 touchdowns and seven interceptions... 240 completions ranked sixth on the EIU single season list while 394 pass attempts were eighth on EIU single season list... ranked 15th in the FCS in passing yards for the regular season and 38th in touchdown passes... passed for more than 300 yards in back-to-back games against UT Martin and Southeast Missouri with season high 359 yards against UT Martin... had a season high four touchdowns passes against UT Martin... had six games with multiple touchdown passes including closing out regular season with three touchdown tosses in road win at Robert Morris... added four rushing touchdowns during the season with three coming in overtime win against Bryant where he scored the game winning two-point conversion on a run (the first rushing 2-point conversion for EIU since the 2002 season)... other rushing touchdown was in win over McNeese... named Big South-OVC Football Offensive Player of the Week one time during the season...

**GEORGETOWN UNIV.:** Was a four-year member of the Georgetown University football team… started 11 games during the 2022 season passing for 2,882 yards and 18 touchdowns earning second team All-Patriot League honors… was 292-for-442 for a 66 completion percentage… set school single season record for pass attempts and passing yards… had three 300-yard passing games during the season with a 358 yard game against Colgate… added 300-yard games against Fordham (322) and Columbia (317)… had six games with multiple touchdown passes with a high of four against Fordham… played in six games during the 2021 season passing for 1,260 yards with three touchdowns… added two rushing touchdowns… played in one game during the 2019 season before Georgetown did not participate during the 2020 COVID season…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Was a two-year team captain at Lakewood HS starting as a senior… set school single season record for passing yards with 3,186 yards and touchdown passes with 28 as a senior… also ran for nine rushing touchdowns as a senior… finished career with 5,027 passing yards and 44 passing touchdowns… was an All-Conference performer in basketball and starter on lacrosse team…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR HOLLEY ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | C-A-Int | PCT | YARDS | TDs | RUSH | YDs | TDs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019 *(GU)* | 1/0 | 0-0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2020 *(GU)* | Georgetown did not play during COVID season | | | | | | | |
| 2021 *(GU)* | 6/4 | 97-160-5 | 60.6 | 1260 | 3 | 33 | 23 | 2 |
| 2022 *(GU)* | 11/11 | 292-442-11 | 66.1 | 2882 | 18 | 40 | -95 | 1 |
| 2023 (EIU) | 11/11 | 240-394-7 | 65.5 | 2741 | 17 | 76 | -88 | 4 |
| **Career (GU)** | **18/15** | **389-602-16** | **64.6** | **4,142** | **21** | **73** | **-72** | **3** |
| **Career** | **29-26** | **629-996-23** | **63.1** | **6,883** | **38** | **149** | **-160** | **7** |

# 2024 EASTERN ILLINOIS PANTHER PROFILES

## 93 -- Jacob Horvath

**Punter • 6-1 • 190 • Sophomore**
**Bentleigh, Australia (McKinnon Secondary College)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in all 11 games during the 2023 season as the starting punter... also became holder on field goals and extra points in second game of season... averaged 38.2 yards per punt with a long punt of 57 yards... had four total punts over 50 yards... had 17 of 54 punts inside the opponents 20-yard line... rushed for 23 yards at Bowling Green on a successful fake punt... earned both Big South-OVC Football Association Freshman and Special Teams Player of the Week honors during the season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Attended McKinnon Secondary College in Bentleigh in the state of Victoria in Australia... played soccer in younger years along with Australian Rules Football as high school aged athlete... worked with ProKickAustralia and was rated the No. 11 punting prospect by ProKicker.com among international kickers...

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR HORVATH ...**

| YEAR | G | P | Avg. | I-20 | 50+ | Long |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2023 | 54 | 54 | 38.2 | 17 | 4 | 57 |

## 23 -- Isaiah Houi

**Defensive Back • 5-10 • 170 • Freshman**
**Rockton, Ill. (Hononegah HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Brian Zimmerman at Hononegah HS in Rockton, Ill… was a two-way athlete playing both wide receiver and defensive back… was a multi-time All-Area and All-NIC-10 performer on both sides of the ball… as an offensive player had 40 receptions for 805 yards and 14 total touchdowns during senior year… on defense had four interceptions and 30 tackles… helped team post an 11-1 record advancing to the IHSA Class 7A state quarterfinals…

## 63 -- Noah Howard

**Offensive Line • 6-5 • 305 • RS-Junior**
**Clinton, Iowa, (Clinton HS / Iowa Central College)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season, used redshirt season...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Was a two-year member of the Iowa Central College football team… starter in 2022 helping team post a 7-4 record including a win in the Game One Bowl over Trinity Valley CC… offense averaged 482 yards of total offense per game and 38 points per game…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Was a standout offensive lineman at Clinton High School… earned All-Conference honors…

## 12 -- Akili Hubbard

**Safety • 6-2 • 195 • RS-Junior**
**Bellflower, Calif. (Bellflower HS / Univ. of Kansas)**



**KANSAS:** Was a member of the Kansas football program during 2023 season as a junior but did not appear in any games using redshirt year based on NCAA participation rule…

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Played 2022 season at Golden West College in Huntington Beach, Calif for coach Nick Mitchell… helped lead team to 9-2 record as defense led the JUCO ranks with 25 interceptions… had 18 tackles with four interceptions… appeared in four games at Golden West College in 2021 making five tackles transitioning from defensive end to safety position…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played high school football at Bellflower High…

## 86 -- Jamal Jeffers

**Wide Receiver • 5-10 • 185 • Senior**
**Oklahoma City, Okla. (Putnam City North HS / NE Okla A&M Univ.)**



**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in one game during the 2023 season seeing time on special teams unit in final game at Robert Morris... did not record any statistics...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Attended Northeastern Oklahoma A&M playing in eight games during the 2021 season... saw most of time on special teams unit... began college career at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in 2019 taking redshirt season... team did not compete during the 2020 season due to COVID-19...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at Putnam City North HS... rated No. 45 in Oklahoma by Six Star Football as a senior... was a two-way player as a defensive back and wide receiver...

## 94 -- Alton Jefferson

**Defensive Line • 6-0 • 290 • Senior**
**Louisville, Ky. (Trinity HS)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in six games during the 2023 season making four starts on the defensive line... finished year with nine tackles including six solo stops... season high five tackles at Northwestern State... part of EIU defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained during the regular season...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games during the 2022 season making one start on the defensive line in the final regular season game at nationally ranked UT Martin... finished season with 16 tackles including seven solo stops... made a season high four tackles at UT Martin... added three tackles against Lindenwood... had two tackles for loss during the season with one against Northwestern State and one at UT Martin... had a fumble recovery against Northwestern State...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Played in all 11 games during the 2021 season making three starts on the defensive line... finished season with 14 tackles, nine solo stops... season high five tackles in first career start against Illinois State... had two tackles in start at Murray State... third start was against nationally ranked UT Martin... had 1.5 tackles for loss on the season with a sack and TFL in final regular season game against Murray State... had a half TFL against Illinois State... had two quarterback hurries for the season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football for coach Bob Beatty at Trinity HS… part of a defensive unit that allowed just five points per game during 2020 season while holding opponents to negative three rushing yards per game and 77 passing yards per contest… defensive front unit has helped Trinity HS lead state in sacks… named honorable mention All-State... named All-Area after helping lead team to Kentucky Class 6A State Championship with 10-0 record… as a junior helped lead team to Kentucky Class 6A State Championship as team posted a 13-2 record… team captain…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR JEFFERSON ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SACK | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | 11/3 | 9 | 5 | 14 | 1.5 | 1 | |
| 2022 | 11/1 | 7 | 9 | 16 | 2 | 0 | 1 FR |
| 2023 | 6/4 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 0 | 0 | |
| **Career** | **28/8** | **22** | **17** | **39** | **3.5** | **1** | **---** |

## 52 -- Jamari Johnson

**Defensive Line • 6-4 • 255 • RS-Junior**
**Chicago, Ill. (De La Salle Institute)**



**2023 (SOPHOMORE):** Did not play during the 2023 season after suffering a season ending injury in preseason camp...

**2022 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Played in eight games seeing time on special teams... did not record any statistics...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in game games during the season, used redshirt season...

**2020 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in one game during the 2020 season played during the spring of 2021... made one tackle in season opener against Jacksonville State...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played defensive end for coach Mike Boehm at De La Salle Institute in Chicago… as a junior helped lead team to an 8-5 record, the best mark by the school since the 2009 season… team played in the Prep Bowl semifinals… as a senior made 13 tackles for loss… honorable mention IHSFCA Class 5A All-State as a senior… first team All-Conference…

## 69 -- Kwan Johnson

**Offensive Line • 6-1 • 310 • Freshman**
**Blue Island, Ill. (Dwight D. Eisenhower HS)**

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Sheamus Murphy at Dwight D. Eisenhower HS in Blue Island, Ill… helped lead team to three straight IHSA playoff appearances including a 7-4 record as a senior advancing to the second round of the IHSA Class 6A state playoffs… was a three-time All-South Suburban Conference selection… earned varsity letters in four sports…

## 67 -- Rahfeeq Katumbusi

**Offensive Line • 6-3 • 320 • Freshman**
**Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mount Carmel HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Jordan Lynch at Chicago Mt. Carmel HS helping lead the team to a 13-1 record and IHSA Class 7A State Championship in 2023… team also posted a 14-0 record during junior season winning Class 7A title… starter on offensive line on both state championship teams… team captain as a senior…earned first team All-Chicago Catholic League as a senior… led an offensive unit that averaged 39 points per game and 444 yards of total offense per game…

## 32 -- Ryan Kilburg

**Safety • 6-0 • 200 • RS-Junior**
**Park Ridge, Ill. (Maine South HS/Western Michigan Univ.)**



**WESTERN MICHIGAN:** Was a four-year member of the Western Michigan football program… did not play in any games in 2023 using redshirt season… played in nine games during the 2022 season primarily on special teams… had six tackles for the season with four at Michigan State… appeared in all 13 games in 2021 finishing season with 11 tackles with most playing time on special teams… had four tackles in win at Pittsburgh… had five tackles in Quick Lane Bowl win over Nevada… appeared in six games during 2020 COVID season with almost all playing time on special teams…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Started 34 games at Maine South HS playing for coach Dave Inserra… consensus three-star prospect, according to ESPN.com, 247Sports.com and Rivals.com... listed as the No. 24 prospect in Illinois by Rivals.com, No. 27 by 247Sports.com and No. 32 by ESPN.com... a Chicago Sun-Times All-Area selection following final season... Maine South won the IHSA Class 8A state championship as a freshman... tabbed the Offensive Player of the Year in the Central Suburban League South with 44 catches for 560 yards and seven touchdowns to go along with 31 carries for 270 yards and three scores as a senior... added a 98-yard kickoff return TD… on defense recorded 56 tackles with three interceptions as a senior…

**Misc.:** older sister Aly Kilburg played soccer at Loyola-Chicago… father Jim Kilburg played at Augustana helping team win 1986 NCAA Division III national championship… uncle Jeff Kilburg played football at Notre Dame…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR KILBURG ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SACK | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 *(WMU)* | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 26 Yds KOR |
| 2021 *(WMU)* | 13 | 8 | 3 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 10 Yds KOR |
| 2022 *(WMU)* | 9 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 1 PBU |
| 2023 *(WMU)* | Redshirted season at Western Michigan | | | | | | |
| **Career** | **22** | **10** | **7** | **17** | **0** | **0** | **----** |

## 9 -- Tre'jon Lewis

**Defensive Line • 6-4 • 285 • RS-Senior**
**Manor, Texas (Manor HS / Texas Tech Univ.)**



**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in nine games during the 2023 season making seven starts... missed games against Illinois State and McNeese due to injury... finished season with 14 tackles including ten solo stops... season high six tackles in season opening shutout win over Indiana State... had a half tackle for loss against both Indiana State and Southeast Missouri... had a half sack against Southeast Missouri... credited with a blocked field goal in win over Bryant while making two solo tackles... part of a defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained during the regular season... team captain...

**2022 (RS-SOPHOMORE):** Transferred to EIU in spring of 2022... played in all 11 games making four starts at defensive end in the final four games of the season... led team in tackles for loss with 7.5 which was tied for 10th in the OVC... made 6.5 of those tackles for loss in final four games including a season high three tackles for loss at McNeese... had 25 tackles for the season with 13 solo stops... season high nine tackles against nationally ranked Southeast Missouri... had one sack against Northwestern State... had a forced fumble against Southeast Missouri... added a fumble recovery against Lindenwood...

**TEXAS TECH:** Was a three year member of the Texas Tech football team… redshirted 2019 season and played in two games as part of special teams unit with no statistics during 2020 COVID season… in 2021 was a reserve defensive lineman for a 7-6 Red Raiders team…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at Manor HS… named to the All-Centex first team at defensive end as a senior… had 81 tackles, 26 tackles for loss and 12 sacks during senior season… rated as a two-star prospect by 247Sports and Rivals…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR T. LEWIS ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SACK | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019 *(TTU)* | Redshirted at Texas Tech | | | | | | |
| 2020 *(TTU)* | 2/0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | --- |
| 2021 *(TTU)* | 12/0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | --- |
| 2022 *(EIU)* | 11/4 | 13 | 12 | 25 | 7.5 | 1 | 1 FF |
| 2023 *(EIU)* | 9/7 | 10 | 4 | 14 | 1 | 0.5 | 1 BLK Kick |
| **Career (TTU)** | **14/0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **----** |
| **---** | | | | | | | |
| **Career (EIU)** | **20/11** | **23** | **16** | **39** | **8.5** | **1.5** | **----** |
| **---** | | | | | | | |
| **Career** | **34/11** | **23** | **16** | **39** | **8.5** | **1.5** | **----** |

## 35 -- Zeke Lewis

**Running Back • 6-0 • 210 • RS-Junior**
**Decatur, Ill. (St. Teresa HS)**



**2023 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in three games during the 2023 season... saw all of playing time on special teams unit... had one tackle on special teams against Tennessee State...

**2022 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Played in five games during the 2022 season seeing time as a back-up running back and on special teams... had five carries for eight yards... season high four carries for five yards against Illinois State... made two tackles on special teams with one at Northern Illinois and one at UT Martin...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Did not play in any games during the 2021 season, used redshirt year...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football for coach Mark Ramsey at Decatur St. Teresa HS... rushed for 389 yards in six games during shortened spring season in 2021 as teams did not play fall football due to COVID-19... rushed for eight touchdowns with one 100-yard rushing game... helped team post a 6-0 record in spring season... earned first team All-Central Illinois Conference honors at linebacker... as a junior rushed for 221 yards and three touchdowns... also started on defensive side of the ball making 77 tackles with 8 tackles for loss as a junior... helped team post an 11-2 record as they lost in the IHSA Class 2A State semifinals...

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR Z. LEWIS ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | RUSH | YDS | TD | LNG | OTHER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | Redshirted at Eastern Illinois | | | | | |
| 2022 | 5/0 | 5 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 2 Tackles |
| 2023 | 3/0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 Tackle |
| **Career** | **8/0** | **5** | **8** | **0** | **3** | **3 Tackles** |

## 13 -- Keshawn Lewis-Hunt

**Linebacker • 6-0 • 220 • Freshman**
**Chicago, Ill. (Morgan Park HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Chris James at Morgan Park HS… was a two-time All-Chicago Public League selection leading team to back-to-back 10-2 records… team reached the IHSA Class 5A state quarterfinals in both junior and senior seasons… played both running back and linebacker in high school… averaged 4.4 yards per carry during senior season rushing for 596 yards and 11 touchdowns… All-Area selection…

## 38 -- Max Loveall

**Wide Receiver • 6-4 • 195 • Freshman**
**Richmond, Ill. (Richmond-Burton HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Mike Noll at Richmond-Burton HS… earned All-Conference honors… helped team win seven games and advance to IHSA Class 4A state playoffs as a senior… had 33 receptions with six touchdowns… also had one punt return for a touchdown… advanced to IHSA Track State Championships…

## 20 -- Kaleb Lyons

**Defensive Back • 5-11 • 185 • Junior**
**Antioch, Tenn. (Brentwood Academy / Morehead State Univ.)**



**2023 - 3rd Team All-American (AP)**
**2023 - 1st Team All-Pioneer League (DB)**

**MOREHEAD STATE:** Was a two-year member of the Morehead State football team… earned third team All-American honors by the Associated Press playing in all 11 games of the 2023 season… tied for the regular season lead for interceptions in the FCS with six… earned first team All-Pioneer Football League honors… finished year with 34 tackles including 1.5 tackles for loss… had three interceptions against Davidson finishing game with four tackles and a sack… had two interception game against Dayton… played in ten games during the 2022 season finishing year with 18 tackles… had one interception against Kentucky Christian…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at Brentwood Academy in Nashville, Tenn… selected to play in Tennessee Athletic Coaches Association All-Star game as a senior… helped lead team to an 8-4 record as a senior…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR LYONS ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | PBU | INT | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 (MOR) | 10 | 12 | 6 | 18 | 1.5 | 4 | 1 | 1 Sack |
| 2023 (MOR) | 11 | 23 | 11 | 34 | 1.5 | 9 | 6 | 1 Sack |
| **Career** | **21** | **35** | **17** | **52** | **3** | **13** | **7** | **2 Sacks** |

## 77 -- Sandro Malicevic

**Offensive Line • 6-5 • 315 • Sophomore**
**Saratoga, Calif. (Prospect HS / San Jose City College)**



**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Played at San Jose City College during the 2023 season appearing as a starter at left tackle on the offensive line… helped program post an 8-2 record while earning first team All-Golden Coast League honors… blocked for an offensive unit that averaged 33.8 points per game with 368.6 yards of total offense per contest… named a JUCO Gridiron third team All-American…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Starter on the offensive line at Prospect High School…

## 11 -- Anthony Manaves

**Tight End • 6-4 • 230 • Gradute Student**
**Chicago, Ill. (St. Patrick HS)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in all 11 games during the 2023 season making ten starts... caught 14 passes for 106 yards during the season... had lone touchdown reception in season opening win over Indiana State... had a season high four receptions in back-to-back weeks against Illinois State and McNeese... season high 38 yards receiving against Illinois State...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in nine games during the 2022 season making nine starts... missed two games in the latter portion of the season due to injury... opened season with five catches for 22 yards at Northern Illinois... finished season with 11 receptions for 63 yards... had a season high 24 yards receiving on two catches against nationally ranked Chattanooga...

**2021 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Played in all 11 games during the 2021 season making four starts at the super back position... caught six passes for 68 yards during the season... season long reception was 31 yards against Tennessee State... had two catches for 38 yards against Tennessee State... had two catches for 21 yards at SEC member South Carolina... had one kickoff return for 21 yards at South Carolina...

**2020 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Appeared in all six games during the 2020 season played during the spring of 2021... made two starts at superback finishing the season with four catches for 57 yards... had two catches for 23 yards at UT Martin... added single receptions against Southeast Missouri and Jacksonville State... season long reception was 31 yards vs Southeast Missouri...

**2019 (FRESHMAN):** Played in two games as a reserve super back... did not record any statistics... used redshirt season per NCAA competition rules...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Adam Guerra at Chicago St. Patrick HS… had nine catches for 33 yards and a touchdown as a tight end… was a two-way starter at both tight end and defensive line… was a two-time All-East Suburban Catholic Conference selection as team posted a 5-4 record during senior year…

***Anthony Manaves Career Stats*** →→→→→

## 43 -- Chase McConnell

**Tight End • 6-5 • 220 • Freshman**
**Lebanon, Tenn. (Watertown HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Gavin Webster at Watertown HS… ranked as one of the top tight end prospects in the state of Tennessee by Prep Redzone… two-way player that hauled in 16 passes for 202 yards as a senior… on defense finished career with 78 tackles including 13 tackles for loss…

## 82 -- Joe McNab

**Tight End • 6-6 • 255 • RS-Junior**
**Madison Heights, Mich. (Lamphere HS)**



**2023 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games during the 2023 season... saw time on special teams as part of the punt unit and on kick return unit... made one tackle during the season at Southeast Missouri...

**2022 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Opened season as a reserve tight end moving to the offensive line group due to injuries in the latter part of the season... made collegiate playing debut in final game of the regular season playing tackle at nationally ranked UT Martin... helped offense post 426 yards of total offense in the game, its second highest total of the season...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2021 season, used redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played tight end and defensive end for coach Jason Charron at Lamphere HS… as a senior hauled in 13 passes for 151 yards and one touchdown on offense… on defense recorded seven tackles for loss with three sacks… helped lead team to an 8-1 record during senior season losing in Michigan Class 4A District 31 finals… earned All-North Conference honors…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR MANAVES ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | RCPTs | YDs | YDs/REC | TDs | LONG |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019 | 2/0 | No other stats (used NCAA redshirt season) | | | | |
| 2020 | 6/2 | 2 | 23 | 11.5 | 0 | 31 |
| 2021 | 11/4 | 6 | 68 | 11.3 | 0 | 31 |
| 2022 | 9/9 | 11 | 63 | 5.7 | 0 | 18 |
| 2023 | 11/10 | 14 | 106 | 7.6 | 1 | 13 |
| **Career** | **39/23** | **33** | **260** | **7.8** | **1** | **31** |

## 57 -- Panayiotis Mihalopoulos

**Offensive Line • 6-3 • 310 • RS-Freshman**
**Chicago, Ill. (Loyola Academy)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season using redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played offensive line for coach John Holecek at Loyola Academy… was an All-Chicago Catholic League selection blocking for an offense that averaged 387 yards per game and 41.5 points per game… as a senior helped lead team to a 13-1 record and IHSA Class 8A State Championship… during junior season team posted a 12-1 record…

## 7 -- Eli Mirza

**Wide Receiver • 5-11 • 195 • Senior**
**Sacramento, Calif. (Monterey Trail HS / Sierra College)**



**2023 - 1st Team All-Big South-OVC (WR)**

**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in 11 games during the 2023 season making ten starts at wide receiver... earned first team All-Big South-OVC Football Association honors at wide receiver... led team with 61 receptions for721 yards and three touchdowns...season best game was ten catches for 119 yards against UT Martin... had receiving touchdowns against UT Martin, at Lindenwood and at Robert Morris... added six rushes for 73 yards with one score against McNeese... season long reception was 38 yards which happened twice during the season at Indiana State and at Lindenwood... ranked 22nd in the FCS (3rd in Big South-OVC) in receptions... was ranked 39th in FCS (fourth in Big South-OVC) in receiving yards... ended season with streak of five or more catches in six straight games... had a total of eight games with five or more catches adding eight against McNeese...had 82 yards on four catches in debut against Indiana State and closed season with six catches for 82 yards at Robert Morris...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Was a two-year member of the Sierra College football team… during the 2022 season hauled in 74 receptions for 929 yards with ten touchdowns… had two games with ten receptions… had four games with more than 100 yards receiving with a high of 145 yards against Butte College… had multiple touchdown receptions in four games… named first team All-California Region I at wide receiver and named Northern California Football Association National Division All-NorCal League… during the 2021 season had 41 receptions for 533 yards and seven touchdowns…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Lettered in football and basketball at Monterey Trail High School… as a senior averaged 17 yards per reception on a team that finished season 12-1…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR MIRZA ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | RCPTs | YDs | YDs/REC | TDs | LONG | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2023 | 11/10 | 61 | 721 | 11.8 | 3 | 38 | 1 Rush TD |

## 2 -- CJ Nelson

**Wide Receiver • 5-11 • 175 • RS-Sophomore**
**North Richland Hills, Texas (Richland HS / Univ. of Houston)**



**HOUSTON:** Played two seasons at the University of Houston… appeared in just two games in 2023 using redshirt year based on NCAA participation rule… played on special teams in those two contests making two tackles… as a freshman in 2022 appeared in all 13 games on special teams seeing time in five games at the wide receiver position… was a member of 8-5 Houston team that ended season with win over Louisiana in the Independence Bowl… made three tackles on special teams... hauled in two passes for seven yards against UCF… named Scout Team Offensive Player of the Week one time…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Multi-faceted athlete at Richland High School that was ranked a 3-star recruit by 247Sports… rated the No. 69 overall wide receiver and No. 60 overall player in Texas, both by 247Sports… playing quarterback as a senior passed for 1,820 yards and 15 touchdowns… rushed for 651 yards with 12 touchdowns as a senior… as a junior playing wide receiver hauled in 48 passes for 1,079 yards and 14 touchdowns… during sophomore year caught 49 passes for 668 yards and six touchdowns… lettered in football, basketball and track… in track competed in 100-dash, long jump and triple jump… named first team Texas District 4-5A D1 at wide receiver as a junior… first team All-District as a sophomore…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR NELSON ...**

| YEAR | G | RCPTs | YDs | YDs/REC | TDs | LONG | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 (UH) | 13 | 2 | 7 | 3.5 | 0 | 4 | 3 tackles |
| 2023 (UH) | 2 | Redshirted season at Houston | | | | | 2 tackles |

## 91 -- Nicholas Oliveira-Chace

**Defensive Line • 6-4 • 275 • Senior**
**Cambridge, Mass. (Cambridge Rindge & Latin / Franklin Pierce Univ.)**



**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2023 (JUNIOR):** Started all 11 games of the 2023 season at the defensive tackle position... ranked fifth on team with 35 tackles for the season with ten solo stops... season high seven tackles at Southeast Missouri with one tackle for loss... had seven tackles for loss for the season which ranked second on the team... added a six tackle game with 1.5 tackles for loss in Mid-America Classic win over Illinois State... added 2.5 sacks with 1.5 sacks in road win at Lindenwood and one sack at Southeast Missouri... had one forced fumble and two fumble recoveries as part of an EIU defense that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained for the regular season... also had 1.5 tackles for loss at Northwestern State and at Lindenwood...

**FRANKLIN PIERCE UNIV.:** Was a two-year member of the Franklin Pierce Univ. football team… appeared in ten games during the 2022 season making 51 tackles with seven tackles for loss and 2.5 sacks… added one forced fumble… played in seven games during the 2021 season finishing year with 27 tackles, one sack and one tackle for loss… earned Northeast-10 Academic Honor Roll…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Was a two-star recruit playing defensive line at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School… also lettered in rugby and track…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR OLIVEIRA-CHACE ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SK | FF | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 *(FP)* | 7 | 11 | 16 | 27 | 1 | 1 | 0 | ---- |
| 2022 *(FP)* | 10 | 20 | 31 | 51 | 7 | 2.5 | 1 | ---- |
| 2023 *(EIU)* | 11 | 10 | 25 | 35 | 7 | 2.5 | 1 | 2 FR |
| **Career *(FP)*** | **17** | **31** | **47** | **78** | **8** | **3.5** | **1** | |
| --- | | | | | | | | |
| **Career** | **28** | **41** | **72** | **113** | **15** | **6** | **2** | **2 FR** |

## 51 -- Payton Orth

**Linebacker • 5-11 • 220 • Senior**
**Frankfort, Ill. (Lincoln-Way East HS)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in all 11 games during the 2023 season as a starter on special teams units... made ten tackles during the season with six solo stops... had two tackles each in games at Bowling Green, against Illinois State, at Southeast Missouri, at Lindenwood and against Tennessee State… had one forced fumble on special teamson punt coverage against Tennessee State helping EIU rank second in the FCS in turnovers gained for the regular season...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games during the 2022 season as a starter on special teams unit... did not record any statistics during the season...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Played in ten games during the 2021 season... saw time on special teams unit and as a reserve linebacker... had four tackles on the season with all four solo stops... had tackles at SEC member South Carolina, at Dayton, against Illinois State and against Tennessee State... had a tackle for loss at Dayton...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played linebacker for coach Rob Zvonar at Lincoln-Way East HS… did not have a senior fall season due to COVID-19… during shortened 2021 spring season earned All-Area honors as team posted a 6-0 record… during junior season helped lead team to a 14-0 record, winning IHSA Class 8A State Championship… made 94 tackles during the season including three tackles in the state championship game (one tackle for loss in championship)…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR ORTH ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SK | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | 10 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 0 | --- |
| 2022 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | --- |
| 2023 | 11 | 6 | 4 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 1 FF |
| **Career** | **32** | **10** | **4** | **14** | **1** | **0** | **1 FF** |

## 71 -- Sebastian Pares

**Offensive Line • 6-6 • 310 • Graduate Student**
**Joliet, Ill. (Wheaton Academy / Univ. of Sioux Falls)**



**2023 - 2nd Team All-Big South-OVC (OL)**

**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2023 (SENIOR):** Played in all 11 games during the 2023 season making ten starts during the season... named second team All-Big South-OVC Football Association at offensive line... made starts at both the right and left guard position ending season as the starter at right guard... also saw time at right tackle during some offensive series during the season... blocked for an offensive unit that had two individual 200-plus yard rushing performances during the season... offensive ranked 25th in the FCS in passing offense and third in the Big South/OVC in total offense at 373 yards per game...

**UNIV. OF SIOUX FALLS:** Was a four-year member of the University of Sioux Falls football team… appeared in 21 games on the offensive line over the past two seasons helping team post back-to-back 8-3 seasons… offense averaged 424 yards of total offense per game and 32.8 points per game… redshirted during the 2019 season and team did not play during the 2020 COVID season…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Lettered in football, basketball and baseball at Wheaton Academy… played left tackle, tight end, defensive end while handling long snapping duties… had 68 tackles, 5.5 sacks and 10 tackles for loss on defense with two blocked field goals and a blocked punt… on offense had 80 pancake blocks and four receptions for 30 yards…

## 48 -- Julian Patino

**Kicker • 5-10 • 200 • RS-Junior**
**Chicago, Ill. (Chicago Mount Carmel HS)**



**2023 (SOPHOMORE):** Began season as a student assistant coach with men's soccer program... re-joined football program following week one injury to starting All-Conference kicker Stone Galloway... made one field goal from 31 yards in debut at Bowling Green... finished season 3-of-3 on field goals connecting from 23 yards at Northwestern State and 34 yards against Tennessee State... finished year 12-of-13 on extra points scoring a total of 21 points for the year... kicked in a total of six games...

**2022 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Member of EIU men's soccer team during spring of 2022... did not play football in 2022...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2021 season, used redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football for coach Jordan Lynch at Chicago Mount Carmel HS… did not have a fall senior season due to State of Illinois COVID-19 restrictions… team played five games posting a 4-1 record in a shortened spring season... varsity kicker as a sophomore and junior… helped program post a 25-2 record during those seasons including a 14-0 record in 2019 as team won IHSA Class 7A State Championship… as a junior was 52-of-55 on extra point attempts with six made field goals… also served as team's punter averaging 31.5 yards per punt…

***Julian Patino Career Stats*** →→→→→

## 21 -- Jay Pearson

**Running Back • 6-0 • 210 • RS-Sophomore**
**McKees Rocks, Pa. (Sto-Rox Junior-Senior HS)**



**2023 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Played in five games during the 2023 season seeing time on special teams units... made two tackles during the year with one tackle at Northwestern State and one tackle against UT Martin...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Did not play in any games during the 2022 season using redshirt year...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played multiple positions for coach LaRoi Johnson at Sto-Rox Junior-Senior HS… saw time as a defensive back, safety, running back and wide receiver during prep career… had 47 tackles with two interceptions and three pass break-ups during senior season… helped lead team to a 12-1 record advancing to the third round of Pennsylvania Class 2A state playoffs… on offense rushed for just under 1,200 yards with 19 touchdowns during senior year earning Three Rivers Conference co-Offensive Player of the Year honors…

## 90 -- Trevon Piggee-Blake

**Defensive Line • 6-1 • 290 • RS-Freshman**
**St. Louis, Mo. (DeSmet Jesuit HS)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season, used redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at DeSmet Jesuit HS in St. Louis... earned Missouri Class 6 All-District honors as a senior... was a member of Missouri Class 6A State Championship team as a freshman... as a senior registered 29 tackles with five sacks and three forced fumbles...

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR PATINO ...**

| YEAR | FG | 20-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50+ | Long | PAT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | Used Redshirt Season at Eastern Illinois | | | | | | |
| 2022 | Member of EIU Men's Soccer Program | | | | | | |
| 2023 | 3-3 | 1-1 | 2-2 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 34 | 12-13 |

## 33 -- Jack Pilson

**Linebacker • 6-0 • 235 • RS-Senior**
**Mattoon, Ill. (Mattoon HS / Lehigh Univ.)**



**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in ten games during the 2023 season seeing time as a starter on special teams unit... made two tackles on special teams with one in win over Illinois State in the Mid-America Classic and one in win over Bryant...

**LEHIGH:** Was a two-year member of the Lehigh University football team… played in ten games during the 2019 season primarily on special teams making one tackle… Lehigh did not compete during the 2020 COVID season… attended Lake Land College in Mattoon, Ill. during 2022 fall…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Troy Johnson at Mattoon HS… was an All-Apollo Conference selection on offense and defense… named Wabash Valley All-Area as a senior… also lettered in track & field…

**Misc.:** Father Jamie and brother Jared both played football at Eastern Illinois…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR PILSON ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SK |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019 *(LU)* | 10 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 2020 *(LU)* | Lehigh Did Not Play Football During COVID Season | | | | | |
| 2023 *(EIU)* | 10 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

## 61 -- Ruben Popoca

**Kicker • 5-11 • 180 • RS-Freshman**
**Mundelein, Ill. (Carmel Catholic HS)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2023 season, used redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at Dave Mattio at Carmel Catholic High School... member of team that posted a 7-4 record... had one field goal and six extra points during the season...

## 19 -- Phoenix Porter

**Linebacker • 6-1 • 220 • RS-Junior**
**Fairfield, Ohio (Fairfield HS)**



**2023 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games as a top reserve linebacker and a starter on special teams units... ranked sixth on team with 34 tackles including 19 solo stops... season best seven tackles with a sack in season opening shutout win over Indiana State... added five tackles with three tackles for loss and two sacks in road win at Lindenwood... also had five tackle game with half tackle for loss in win over Bryant... finished year with five tackles for loss and three sacks... had one forced fumble against UT Martin playing as a part of a defense that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained during the regular season... had a pass break-up at Southeast Missouri...

**2022 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Played in all 11 games during the 2022 season making one start at linebacker in the final regular season game at nationally ranked UT Martin... finished season with 30 tackles making 14 solo stops... made a season high six tackles against Northwestern State... added five tackle games against Northern Illinois and UT Martin... finished season with one tackle for loss...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in first two games of the season before suffering a season ending injury at SEC member South Carolina... used redshirt season per NCAA competition rules... made seven tackles in two games with three solo stops... had five tackles in season opener at Indiana State... had two tackles at South Carolina...

**2020 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in all six games during the 2020 season played in the spring of 2021... saw time on special teams unit and as a reserve linebacker... finished season with nine tackles including four solo stops... season high five tackles in final game of year against Jacksonville State which included a sack... had two tackles in season college debut against Southeast Missouri and two tackles in home win over Tennessee Tech...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played linebacker for coach Jason Krause at Fairfield HS… helped lead team to a 10-2 record as a senior losing in the Ohio Division I Regional semifinals… named first team All-Greater Miami Conference as a senior… team captain… led team with 64 tackles adding three sacks, two forced fumbles and three fumble recoveries... as a junior was second on the team with 55 tackles and 2.5 sacks earning second team All-Conference honors…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR PORTER ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SK |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 | 6/0 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 1 |
| 2021 | 2/0 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| 2022 | 11/1 | 14 | 16 | 30 | 1 | 0 |
| 2023 | 11/0 | 19 | 15 | 34 | 5 | 3 |
| **Career** | **30/1** | **40** | **40** | **80** | **8** | **4** |

## 50 -- Jerrad Price

**Defensive Line • 6-3 • 300 • Graduate Student**
**Spurlockville, W.Va. (Lincoln County HS / Univ of Charleston)**



**UNIV. OF CHARLESTON:** Played the 2023 season at the University of Charleston (W.Va.) helping the team post a 10-2 record while advancing to the second round of the NCAA Division II playoffs… appeared in 12 games making nine tackles with two tackles for loss and one fumble recovery… season high four tackles against Glenville State…

**DAVIDSON:** Was a member of Davidson College football program for four previous years… took redshirt season in 2019 and appeared in four games during 2021 COVID spring season making six tackles… played in 20 games over next two seasons with 15 tackles, two tackles for loss and one quarterback hurry… was a three-time Pioneer Football League Academic Honor Roll selection…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played high football at Lincoln County High School in Hamlin, West Virginia… as a senior started on both sides of the ball making 59 tackles with 19 tackles for loss, 10.5 sacks and two interceptions…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR PRICE ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SK |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019 *(DC)* | Redshirted Year at Davidson College | | | | | |
| 2020 *(DC)* | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 2021 *(DC)* | 9 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| 2022 *(DC)* | 12 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 3.5 | 0 |
| 2023 *(UC)* | 12 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 0 |
| **Career** | **35** | **12** | **17** | **29** | **5.5** | **0** |

## 15 -- Malik Rainey

**Defensive Back • 5-11 • 190 • RS-Junior**
**Chicago, Ill. (Bolingbrook HS / Univ. of Cincinnati)**



**EASTERN ILLINOIS**
**2023 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in eight games during the 2023 season making one start at Northwestern State... finished year with five tackles with two solo tackles... had a season high three tackles in home win over McNeese... added a tackle at Bowling Green and one in home win over Tennessee State... was part of a defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained during the regular season...

**CINCINNATI:** Spent two seasons at Cincinnati... redshirted the 2021 season and appeared in two games in 2022 on a Bearcats team that went 9-4 and played in the Wasabi Fenway Bowl... made one tackle against Arkansas while also playing against Kennesaw State...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Prepped for coach John Ivlow at Bolingbrook HS and was rated a 3-Star recruit by 247Sports... was an All-Area selection playing senior season as part of the 2020 season played in the shortened 2021 spring season...

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR RAINEY ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | INT | PBU |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 *(UC)* | Redshirted season at Cincinnati | | | | | | |
| 2022 *(UC)* | 2/0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2023 *(EIU)* | 8/1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

## 84 -- Jeremy Reeves

**Wide Receiver • 6-4 • 190 • Freshman**
**Chicago, Ill. (Gary Comer College Prep)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at Gary Comer College Prep Noble School… hauled in more than 65 passes for over 1,200 yards and 11 touchdowns over the last two seasons… helped team advance to IHSA Class 4A state playoffs as a junior…

## 9 -- Aaron Rice

**Wide Receiver • 6-5 • 200 • RS-Sophomore**
**Farmington Hills, Mich. (North Farmington HS)**



**2023 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Did not play in any games during the 2023 season...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Played in one game during the 2022 season using redshirt season under NCAA participation rule... played in final game of regular season against nationally ranked UT Martin seeing time on special teams and as a reserve wide receiver... did not record any statistics...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at North Farmington HS… was a two-time All-State selection… twice named to the Region and All-Metro North teams… was a three-year starter for team helping program reach state playoffs each season.. as a senior had 28 receptions for 697 yards… also was six of seven passing with two touchdowns during the season…

## 40 -- Isaiah Richardson

**Safety • 6-5 • 210 • RS-Freshman**
**Suwanee, Ga. (Collins Hill HS)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Played in one game during the 2023 season... did not record any statistics... used redshirt season under NCAA participation rule...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played wide receiver and linebacker for coach Lenny Gregory at Collins Hill High School… had 13 receptions for 162 yards as a senior… led team with five touchdown receptions averaging 12.6 yards per catch… on defense had 30 tackles with four sacks and two pass break-ups… as a junior helped lead team to a Georgia Class 7A State Championship as team posted a 15-0 record during the season… team would then play in the Geico State Champions National Bowl Series losing to Graham-Kapowsin HS from Washington… had one touchdown reception during the season… rated a two-star recruit by Rivals.com…

## 80 -- Quenton Rodgers

**Wide Receiver • 6-2 • 190 • RS-Freshman**
**Mahomet, Ill. (Mahomet-Seymour HS)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Played in four games during the 2023 season... used redshirt season under NCAA participation rule… played on special teams unit in all four games and as a reserve wide receiver in final game of season at Robert Morris... did not record any statistics...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at Mahomet-Seymour HS for coach Jon Adkins... set school record for receiving yards and receptions in both a season and career... as a junior caught 58 passes for 1,255 yards... during senior year caught 59 passes for 1,141 yards... earned Class 5A All-State honors leading team to 11-1 record and IHSA quarterfinal playoff run as a senior... averaged 39.1 yards per kickoff return with more than 700 yards in kickoff returns... added 435 yards rushing... finished with 29 touchdown receptions and 16 rushing touchdowns...

## 19 -- Jacob Rosenstiel

**Quarterback • 6-4 • 210 • Freshman**
**Boerne, Texas (Geneva School of Boerne)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Grant Gaston at Geneva School of Boerne in the suburbs of San Antonio… earned first team Division III All-District 3 honors as an athlete in 2023… named second team All-District at quarterback position in 2022… passed for just under 3,400 (3,393) yards during the last two years with 18 touchdown passes… rushed for another 1,285 yards with 18 rushing touchdowns…

**Misc.:** Father Bob Rosenstiel played football at Eastern Illinois and in the NFL with the then Oakland Raiders...

## 97 -- Tray Ross

**Defensive Line • 6-4 • 230 • Freshman**
**Danville, Ind. (Danville Community HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Jayme Comer at Danville Community HS… was an Indiana All-State selection as a junior and multiple-time All-Sagamore Conference honors… recorded 41 tackles with 7.5 tackles for loss as a senior… as a junior had 43 tackles with 6.5 tackles for loss and 3.5 sacks as team… helped team post a 7-3 record as a senior advancing to the IHSAA Class 3A State playoffs…

## 47 -- Drew Schiller

**Kicker • 6-1 • 170 • Freshman**
**New Lenox, Ill. (Lincoln-Way Central HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach David Woodburn at Lincoln-Way Central HS… earned varsity letters in football and as a starter on soccer team… named first-team All-SouthWest Suburban Conference… earned All-Area and IHSFCA All-State honors… was 30-of-31 on extra points for the season and 9-of-10 on field goals with a long of 47… helped team go 9-2 during the season reaching second round of IHSA Class 7A State playoffs…

## 25 -- Christopher Sharp

**Defensive Back • 5-11 • 180 • RS-Freshman**
**St. Louis, Mo. (DeSmet Jesuit HS)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Played in four games during the 2023 season... used redshirt season under NCAA participation rule... saw time on special teams unit and as a reserve defensive back... made two tackles, both at Southeast Missouri... had a fumble recovery on a forced fumble on a punt... was part of a defense that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained during the regular season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at De Smet Jesuit HS... rated No. 9 defensive back in Missouri by Six Star Football as a senior... as a senior had 38 tackles with two tackles for loss... helped team reach the Missouri Class 6 State Championship semifinals as a senior... was a first team All-Conference selection...

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR SHARP ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | INT | PBU | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2023 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 FR |

## 64 -- Connor Shelby

**Offensive Line • 6-4 • 280 • Freshman**
**Mt. Carmel, Ill. (Mt. Carmel HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Michael Brewer at Mt. Carmel HS… played both tackle positions during high school… blocked for an offensive that averaged 40.5 points per game and 430.7 yards per game during the season… helped lead team to IHSA Class 3A state runner-up finish… earned first team All-Little Illini Conference…

## 5 -- Anthony Shockey

**Linebacker • 6-1 • 230 • Graduate Student**
**Lombard, Ill. (Glenbard East HS)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Started all 11 games at linebacker during the 2023 season... ranked third on the team with 56 tackles... had two double figure tackle games with a high of 11 at Bowling Green... added ten tackles with nine solo stops in road win at Lindenwood... made 36 solo tackles... had seven tackles for loss to tie for second on team... ended year with four tackles and two tackles for loss in road win at Robert Morris... had six tackles (five solo) with 1.5 tackles for loss in home win over Tennessee State... had a forced fumble against UT Martin... had an interception in season opening shutout win over Indiana State... was part of a defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained during the regular season... added two pass break-ups...

**2022 (RS-SOPHOMORE):** Played in five games during the 2022 season... saw time on special teams unit and as a reserve linebacker... finished season with 11 tackles including two solo stops... season high four tackles against Southeast Missouri... had a half sack at McNeese...

**2021 (SOPHOMORE):** Missed entire season due to injury, used redshirt season...

**2020 (SOPHOMORE):** Appeared in all six games during the 2020 season played in the fall of 2021... started the first three games of the season at linebacker... finished year with 26 tackles to rank fifth on team... made 12 solo stops... opened season with nine tackles including two tackles for loss against Southeast Missouri... added eight tackles at UT Martin... had two tackles for loss with four total tackles at Murray State... had an interception returned 47 yards during home win over Tennessee Tech...

**2019 (FRESHMAN):** Played in all 12 games at linebacker and one special teams unit... made one start at Murray State... finished year with 32 tackles including 21 solo stops... opened season with three tackles and a tackle for loss at Chattanooga... season high six tackles with a half tackle for loss at Indiana State... had six tackles with 1.5 tackles for loss and a half sack at Murray State... had 3.5 tackles for loss on the season... had two forced fumbles against Indiana State and Murray State... added five tackles at Indiana...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played linebacker at Glenbard East HS in Lombard for head coach John Walters, an Eastern Illinois alumnus... as a senior named the Upstate Eight Defensive Player of the Year after recording 81 tackles with 17 tackles for loss and 2.5 sacks... was a two-time first-team All-Conference selection after making 72 tackles as a junior... was an honorable mention Class 7A All-State selection as a senior as the team posted a 10-1 record advancing to the second round of the IHSA Class 7A playoffs… team captain…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR SHOCKEY ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SK | INT | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019 | 12/1 | 21 | 11 | 32 | 3.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 2 FF |
| 2020 | 6/3 | 12 | 14 | 26 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 FR |
| 2021 | Redshirted season at EIU | | | | | | | |
| 2022 | 5/0 | 2 | 9 | 11 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | --- |
| 2023 | 11/11 | 36 | 20 | 56 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 FF |
| **Career** | **34/15** | **71** | **54** | **125** | **15** | **1** | **2** | **----** |

## 96 -- Cody Silzer

**Defensive Line • 6-3 • 260 • RS-Sophomore**
**Lockport, Ill. (Lockport Township HS)**



**2023 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Missed 2023 season due to injury...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2022 season, used redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played defensive line for coach George Czart at Lockport Township HS… helped lead team to a 13-1 record winning the IHSA Class 8A State Championship as a senior… starter on a defensive unit that posted five shutouts during the season allowing just 7.8 points per game for the season… had one pass break-up in State Championship game… had 30 tackles with ten tackles for loss… also lettered in wrestling… team captain…

## -- Cole Silzer

**Defensive Line • 6-3 • 280 • RS-Sophomore**
**Lockport, Ill. (Lockport Township HS)**



**2024 (SOPHOMORE):** Will missed 2024 season due to injury...

**2023 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Played in two games during the 2023 season seeing time as a reserve defensive lineman... made first career tackle in college debut in road win at Northwestern State... also saw playing time in road win at Robert Morris in final game of the season...

**2022 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2022 season, used redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played defensive line for coach George Czart at Lockport Township HS… helped lead team to a 13-1 record winning the IHSA Class 8A State Championship as a senior… starter on a defensive unit that posted five shutouts during the season allowing just 7.8 points per game for the season… had one pass break-up and a fumble recovery in State Championship game… had 42 tackles with 8.5 sacks… earned first team All-South West Suburban Conference Blue honors as a senior… qualified for IHSA State Track Championships in the shot put as a junior and senior… team captain…

## 92 -- Colby Smith

**Defensive Line • 6-0 • 300 • Senior**
**Dunnellon, Fla. (Dunnellon HS / Dodge City CC)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in eight games making seven starts on the defensive line during the 2023 season... missed three games in early portion of season due to injury... finished with 16 tackles including ten solo stops... season high three tackles at Bowling Green and against UT Martin... had two sacks coming against UT Martin and at Lindenwood... added one forced fumble... was part of a defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained during the regular season...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games during the 2022 season making six starts on the defensive line... finished season with 23 tackles including eight solo stops... season high six tackles at Tennessee State... had one interception coming against Tennessee Tech... had 3.5 tackles for loss on the year with a high of 1.5 TFL at Tennessee State... added four tackle games at Murray State and against Southeast Missouri...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Played one season at Dodge City CC… appeared in eight games during the 2021 season making 14 tackles… had four tackles for loss and one sack… added one pass break-up…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at Dunnellon HS… was named the Ocala Star-Banner Defensive Player of the Year as s senior… helped lead team to the Florida Class 5A state semifinals… had 24 tackles with 14 tackles for loss and 4.5 sacks… added two forced fumbles and a safety anchoring a defense that allowed just 9.4 points per game…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR C. SMITH. ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SK | INT | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 11/6 | 8 | 15 | 23 | 3.5 | 0 | 1 | --- |
| 2023 | 8/7 | 10 | 6 | 16 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 FF |
| **Career** | **19/13** | **18** | **21** | **39** | **5.5** | **2** | **1** | **---** |

## 6 -- DeAirious Smith

**Wide Receiver • 5-11 • 185 • Senior**
**Lexington, Ky. (Lexington Christian Academy)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in all 11 games during the 2023 season making two starts at wide receiver... had starts in games at Bowling Green and against McNeese... finished year with 28 receptions for 494 yards and two touchdowns... season high five receptions for 67 yards in road win at Lindenwood... hauled in four passes for season high 118 yards at Southeast Missouri... also had four catches for 83 yards for one touchdown at Bowling Green… had other touchdown catch in season ending win at Robert Morris... ranked 24th in the FCS in yards per reception at 17.6 yards per catch...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in nine games during the 2022 season making two starts at wide receiver... had 12 catches for 127 yards and two touchdowns... had a season high five catches for 73 yards against Lindenwood including one touchdown... added a touchdown reception against nationally ranked Chattanooga... season long reception was 38 yards... had one kick return for 11 yards against Lindenwood...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Played in nine games during the 2021 season making two starts at wide receiver... finished season with 14 receptions for 209 yards and three touchdowns... had a season high six catches for 109 yards and two touchdowns in road win at Tennessee Tech... had four catches for 48 yards at Murray State... had one touchdown reception against nationally ranked UT Martin... season long reception was 56 yards at Tennessee Tech... had one special teams touchdown returning a blocked punt for a touchdown against Illinois State... tied for second on team in scoring with 24 points (four touchdowns)...

**2020 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in five games during the 2020 season played in the spring of 2021... saw playing time on special teams unit... blocked a punt that resulted in a safety in first collegiate game at UT Martin... blocked punt traveled 23 yards... had one fair catch for no return on kickoff team at Murray State...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Doug Charles at Lexington Christian Academy as both a wide receiver and defensive back… led state of Kentucky in receiving yards per game as a senior at 139 finishing season with 82 catches for 1,671 yards and three touchdowns… earned first team All-State honors at wide receiver… helped lead team to Kentucky Class 2A state playoffs second round as a senior after team advanced to state playoff quarterfinals as a junior… team won 21 games over junior and senior seasons… as a junior was All-City selection with 60 catches for 923 yards and 11 touchdowns… added three interceptions on defense during senior year…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR D. SMITH ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | RCPTs | YDs | YDs/REC | TDs | LONG | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 | 5/0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 Blk Punt |
| 2021 | 9/2 | 14 | 209 | 14.9 | 3 | 56 | 1 ST TD |
| 2022 | 9/2 | 12 | 127 | 10.6 | 2 | 38 | ---- |
| 2023 | 11/2 | 28 | 494 | 17.6 | 2 | 54 | ---- |
| **Career** | **34/6** | **54** | **830** | **15.3** | **7** | **56** | **----** |

## 53 -- King Smith

**Defensive Line • 6-3 • 315 • Freshman**
**Decatur, Ill. (Decatur MacArthur HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Derek Spates at Decatur MacArthur HS… four year starter on defense… two-time first-team All-Central State Eight selection on defense… also played on offensive line during prep career… helped lead team to six wins and IHSA Class 5A State playoff appearance…

## 78 -- Joseph Solomon

**Offensive Line • 6-5 • 295 • Graduate Student**
**Indianapolis, Ind. (Bishop Chatard HS)**



**APPALACHIAN STATE:** Was a member of the Appalachian State football program during the 2023 season but did not appear in any games…

**TULANE:** Appeared in two games over three seasons at Tulane (2020-2022) with a COVID season in 2020 and a redshirt season with one appearance in 2021…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Appeared in one game in 2022 against Alcorn State… attended Bishop Chatard High School helping lead the team to the 2019 Indiana Class 3A State Championship… named a 3-star recruit by 247Sports… was part of 2018 Class 3A semifinalist team…

**MISC.:** Is the younger brother of former EIU offensive lineman Ben Solomon… another older brother Adam Soloman played offensive line at Illinois and Illinois State...

## 8 -- Joey Sprinkle

**Quarterback • 6-4 • 220 • Junior**
**Monticello, Ill. (Monticello HS / St. Ambrose Univ.)**



**ST. AMBROSE:** Played two seasons at St. Ambrose University… in 2023 appeared in eight games… passed for 892 yards with 12 touchdowns going 66-of-121 through the air… ended season with 50 yards rushing… had eight interceptions… passed for a season high 285 yards at Upper Iowa going 18-of-30 with three touchdowns… had a 266 yard passing day with five touchdowns against Judson… as a freshman in 2022 played in season opener suffering a broken arm in the contest… return to play in the season finale finishing year with 211 yards and two touchdowns...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at Monticello HS… earned All-State honors as a senior leading to an 8-3 record and the second round of the IHSA Class 3A playoffs… also a standout basketball player leading school to a IHSA Class 2A state runner-up finish as a senior..

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR SPRINKLE ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | C-A-Int | PCT | YARDS | TDs | RUSH | YDs | TDs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 *(SA)* | 2/0 | 15-28-1 | 53.6 | 211 | 2 | 7 | -4 | 0 |
| 2023 (SA) | 8/4 | 66-121-8 | 54.5 | 892 | 12 | 75 | 50 | 0 |
| **Career** | **10/4** | **81-149-9** | **54.3** | **1,103** | **14** | **82** | **46** | **0** |

## 88 -- Jordan Sprycha

**Tight End • 6-4 • 240 • Graduate Student**
**Oak Lawn, Ill. (Oak Lawn HS / McKendree Univ.)**



**2023 - Honorable Mention All-GLVC (TE)**
**2022 - Honorable Mention All-GLVC (TE)**

**McKENDREE:** Was a four-year member of the McKendree football team… played in 11 games in 2023 making 24 catches for 188 yards and a touchdown… hauled in a season-high six passes for 54 yards and a score against Minnesota State Moorhead… added four catches for 50 yards against Ashland in the America's Crossroads Bowl… earned honorable mention All-GLVC honors… earned honorable mention All-GLVC after starting all 11 games during the 2022 season… had 22 receptions for 178 yards and five touchdowns… season-high four receptions against Delta State, Lake Erie and Missouri S&T… season-high 62 yards against Lake Erie… appeared in eight games during the 2021 season finishing year with ten receptions for 134 yards and three touchdowns… had a pair of touchdown receptions against Southwest Baptist… played in one game during the 2020 COVID season…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played at Oak Lawn HS… earned All-Region and All-South Suburban Conference honors as a senior… accounted for 400 yards and five touchdowns during senior year…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR SPRYCHA ...**

| YEAR | G | RCPTs | YDs | YDs/REC | TDs | LONG |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 *(MCK)* | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2021 *(MCK)* | 8 | 10 | 134 | 13.4 | 3 | 32 |
| 2022 *(MCK)* | 11 | 22 | 193 | 8.8 | 5 | 44 |
| 2023 *(MCK)* | 11 | 24 | 188 | 7.8 | 1 | 27 |
| **Career** | **31** | **56** | **515** | **9.2** | **9** | **44** |

## 34 -- Jordyn Stewart

**Linebacker • 6-0 • 230 • Freshman**
**Homewood, Ill. (Homewood-Flossmoor HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Terrell Alexander at Homewood-Flossmoor HS… recorded 78 tackles with 11.5 tackles for loss and 4.5 sacks during senior season… added one interception, two pass break-ups and one forced fumble… helped team reach back-to-back IHSA Class 8A State playoff appearances as a junior and senior… named second team All-Area and first team All-SouthWest Suburban Conference as a senior…

## 56 -- Christian Takatch

**Defensive Line • 6-3 • 245 • Sophomore**
**Sunbury, Ohio (Big Walnut HS / Notre Dame College)**



**NOTRE DAME COLLEGE:** Played freshman season (2022) at Notre Dame College appearing in one game and making one tackle...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Lettered in football, wrestling and baseball at Big Walnut HS... was a multi-year starter... earned both All-Conference and All-District honors... recognized as North/South Player of the Game...

## 72 -- Elkhanan Tanelus

**Offensive Line • 6-2 • 340 • Graduate Student**
**Naples, Fla. (Barron Collier HS)**



**2023 (GRADUATE):** Played in four games during the 2023 season returning from 2022 season ending injury... made three starts at right guard... blocked for an offensive unit that had two individual 200-plus yard rushing performances during the season... offensive ranked 25th in the FCS in passing offense and third in the Big South/OVC in total offense at 373 yards per game...

**2022 (JUNIOR):** Started first two games of the season at offensive center before suffering season ending injury against nationally ranked Chattanooga... used medical redshirt season... blocked for an offensive line that produced a season best 441 yards of total offense in the season opener at Northern Illinois...

**2021 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in nine games during the 2021 season... made starts in eight games at left guard for an offensive group that averaged 285.5 yards per game...

**2020 (SOPHOMORE):** Started all six games during the 2020 season played in the spring of 2021... started at left guard for an offensive line that produced 20 points per game and 320.5 yards of total offense per game...

**2019 (FRESHMAN):** Played in ten games on the offensive line... made nine starts during the season at left guard including the first two games of the season at Chattanooga and Indiana... was a member of offensive line that had five true freshmen on the offensive line for several series during the season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played offensive and defensive line for coach Mark Jackson at Barron Collier HS… helped team post a 7-5 record as a senior helping team advance to the Florida Class 6A state playoffs… blocked for an offensive unit that rushed for an average of 197.9 yards and 24.7 points per game… earned first team All-Area honors… on the defensive line finished year with 18 tackles and two sacks… team captain…

## 45 -- Caden Telleson

**Linebacker • 5-11 • 220 • RS-Freshman**
**Redondo Beach, Calif. (Redondo Union HS)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Did not play in any games during the 2023 season, used redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at Redondo Union HS for coach Keith Ellison... registered 53 tackles with one interception and two forced fumbles as a senior before injury ended season in eighth game of season... earned All-Bay League honors...

## 11 -- Elijawah Tolbert

**Linebacker • 6-1 • 230 • Senior**
**Country Club Hills, Ill. (Hillcrest HS)**



**2023 - 1st Team All-Big South-OVC (LB)**
**2022 - 1st Team All-OVC (Linebacker)**

**2024 (SENIOR):** Named Preseason Third Team All-American by STATS Perform... named to Preseason Watch List for Buck Buchanan Award... participated in spring 2024 football practice at Missouri State before transferring back to EIU program in summer of 2024...

**2023 (JUNIOR):** Started all 11 games at linebacker during the 2023 season... named first team All-Big South-OVC Football Association at linebacker... ld team in tackles for the season finishing with 87 tackles which ranked fourth in the Big South-OVC... named FCS National Defensive Player of the Week following opening week shutout win over Indiana State after making 11 tackles (seven solo) with a forced fumble and interception... part of a defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained for the season... had 11 tackles at Bowling Green and against Tennessee State... made a season high 12 tackles at Northwestern State... had 46 solo tackles matching a high of seven solo stops in win over Tennessee State... tied for second on team with seven tackles for loss... had two tackles for loss at Lindenwood with 1.5 TFL at Southeast Missouri... had a forced fumble against UT Martin...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games making ten starts at linebacker... named first team All-Ohio Valley Conference at linebacker... finished season ranked third on team in tackles with 70 including 32 solo tackles... named OVC Defensive Player of the Week on Sept. 25 following OVC opening win at Murray State which included six tackles (three solo), two interceptions and three pass break-ups... finished season tied for team lead with three interceptions adding one at Illinois State... had 6.5 tackles for loss with a high of two against Lindenwood... ended season with 1.5 tackles for loss at nationally ranked UT Martin... posted a season high 11 tackles in season opener at Northern Illinois... had eight tackles against Lindenwood...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in seven games during the 2021 season... saw time on special teams unit and as a reserve linebacker... finished season with five tackles, three solo stops... had two solo stops in first collegiate action at SEC member South Carolina... had two tackles against Tennessee State... had one tackle at Southeast Missouri...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football for coach Dontrell Jackson at Thornton Township HS… did not have a fall senior season due to State of Illinois COVID019 restrictions… as a junior helped team post an 8-3 record advancing to the second round of the IHSA Class 7A State playoffs… played linebacker and wide receiver… earned second team All-Area honors and first team All-Southland Athletic Conference honors… finished season with 122 tackles including 15 tackles for loss and nine sacks… played spring 2021 football in Illinois at Hillcrest HS during shortened season…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR TOLBERT ...**

| YEAR | G/GS | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SACK | INT | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | 7/0 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | ---- |
| 2022 | 11/10 | 32 | 38 | 70 | 6.5 | 1.5 | 3 | 3 PBU |
| 2023 | 11/11 | 46 | 41 | 87 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 2 FF |
| **Career** | **29/21** | **81** | **81** | **162** | **13.5** | **1.5** | **4** | **----** |

## 24 -- Collin Tyson

**Safety • 6-0 • 195 • RS-Junior**
**Kansas City, Mo. (Platte County R-3 HS)**



**2023 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games as a starter on special teams and as a reserve defensive back... made eight tackles with five solo stops... made a season high four tackles at Southeast Missouri with a half tackle for loss... added individual tackles at Northwestern State, against Bryant, at Lindenwood and against Tennessee State... had two pass break-ups... part of a defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained during the regular season...

**2022 (RS-FRESHMAN):** Appeared in all 11 games as a starter on special teams and as a reserve defensive back... had a blocked punt against nationally ranked Southeast Missouri which was returned 13 yards... did not record any other statistics during the season...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in two games during the 2021 season... saw playing time on special teams unit... did not record any statistics... used redshirt season per NCAA competition rules...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football for coach Bill Utz at Platte County R-3 HS… helped team win Suburban Blue regular season title while posting a 13-2 record… team lost in the Missouri Class 5 State Championship game… named first team All-Conference and All-District as a senior… as a junior helped team reach the Missouri Class 4 State Championship game… also lettered in track competing in sprints, the long jump and triple jump…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR TYSON ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | INT | PBU | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | 2 | Used Redshirt Season At Eastern Illinois | | | | | | |
| 2022 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 BLK |
| 2023 | 11 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 0.5 | 0 | 2 | ---- |
| **Career** | **24** | **5** | **3** | **8** | **0.5** | **0** | **2** | **1 BLK** |

## 66 -- Jack Valente

**Offensive Line / Long Snapper • 6-5 • 320 • Senior**
**Batavia, Ill. (Batavia HS)**



**2022 - 2nd Team All-OVC (Long Snapper)**

**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in nine games during the 2023 season... made starts in seven games played at both guard and tackle positions... was also the long snapper for a majority of the season… blocked for an offensive unit that had two individual 200-plus yard rushing performances during the season... offensive ranked 25th in the FCS in passing offense and third in the Big South/OVC in total offense at 373 yards per game...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games during the 2022 season and was the only offensive lineman to start all 11 games... named second team All-Ohio Valley Conference at long snapper as team had one of the best special teams units in the OVC with both the first team All-OVC kicker and punter... versatile lineman that played all along the offensive line during the season with six starts at right tackle, four starts at right guard and one start at offensive center... helped block for an offensive unit that produced three 400-plus yard offensive games during the season... Academic All-District as selected by College Sports Communicators (formerly CoSIDA)...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Played in ten games during the 2021 season... saw time as the long snapper on punt team and as a reserve offensive lineman playing tackle... punt team was second in the OVC in punting average for the season... blocked for an offensive unit that averaged 285.5 yards per game... had one special teams tackle against nationally ranked UT Martin...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football for coach Dennis Piron at Batavia HS… was long snapper on special teams but also saw time at tight end and defensive line… did not have a fall season due to State of Illinois COVID-19 restrictions… helped team post a 4-2 record during a shortened spring 2021 season... rated No. 19 long snapper at Kohl's Football and Kicking Camps… as a junior helped team post a 9-3 record advancing to the IHSA Class 7A state playoff quarterfinals… also lettered in basketball and lacrosse…

## 95 -- Drake Van Hyfte

**Defensive Line • 6-4 • 280 • RS-Junior**
**Annawan, Ill. (Annawan-Wethersfield HS)**



**2023 (RS-SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games during the 2023 season... finished season with 23 tackles including 12 solo stops... led team in tackles for loss with nine closing season with 6.5 tackles for loss in the final three games of the season... had three sacks in final regular season win at Robert Morris with 3.5 tackles for loss... had a sack at Lindenwood and another against UT Martin... added four quarterback hurries and one pass break-up... part of a defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained for the regular season... had a season high five tackles in final two games against Tennessee State and at Robert Morris...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Appeared in four games during the 2022 season... used redshirt season under NCAA participation rules... did not record any statistics seeing time on special teams and as a back-up defensive lineman...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in nine games during the 2021 season... saw time on special teams and as a reserve defensive lineman on a unit that ranked first in the OVC in team tackles for loss... did not record any statistics during the season...

**2020 (FRESHMAN):** Did not appear in any games during the 2020 season played in the spring of 2021...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Logan Willits at Annawan-Wethersfield HS… moved to linebacker as a senior after earning All-Lincoln Trail Conference honors at defensive line as a junior… helped lead team to IHSA Class 1A state semifinals with a record of 12-1… named All-State at linebacker finishing season with 163 tackles including 81 solo stops… added 38 tackles for loss with five sacks, three interceptions and a blocked kick… was a two-way player earning first-team All-Lincoln Trail Conference honors at linebacker and offensive line as a senior… father Ted played football at Wake Forest… mother Val played basketball at Bradley… team captain…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR VAN HYFTE ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SACK | PBU |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 | Did not appear in any games during COVID season | | | | | | |
| 2021 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2022 | 4 | Used Redshirt Season at Eastern Illinois | | | | | |
| 2023 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 23 | 9 | 5 | 1 |
| **Career** | **24** | **12** | **11** | **23** | **9** | **5** | **1** |

## 44 -- Luke Wagner

**Defensive Line • 6-4 • 240 • RS-Junior**
**Washington, Pa. (McGuffey HS / Santa Barbara City College)**



**2023 (RS-SOPHOMORE):** Played in all 11 games during the 2023 season as a starter on special teams and as a reserve defensive lineman... made four tackles during the season... had season high two tackles in home win over Bryant... added tackles against Indiana State and at Bowling Green... had one quarterback hurry... part of defensive unit that ranked second in the FCS in turnovers gained during the regular season...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Played in one game during the 2022 season using redshirt season under NCAA participation rules... appeared in final game of the year at nationally ranked UT Martin as a reserve defensive lineman... made one tackle...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Played one season at Santa Barbara City College… appeared in nine games during the 2021 season making 18 tackles… added 1.5 sacks and 4.5 tackles for loss… helped team post a 7-4 record advancing to play in the Chick-fil-A Winter Festi-Bowl…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** attended McGuffey HS lettering in both football and baseball… earned All-Conference honors in football…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR VAN HYFTE ...**

| YEAR | G | ST | AT | TT | TFL | SACK | PBU |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | Used Redshirt Year At EIU | | |
| 2023 | 11 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

## 55 -- Drew Wilder

**Offensive Line • 6-3 • 305 • RS-Junior**
**Williamsburg, Va. (Jamestown HS / Iowa Western CC)**



**2023 (SOPHOMORE):** Started all 11 games at center anchoring offensive line during the 2023 season... only offensive lineman to start all 11 games during the season... blocked for an offensive unit that had two individual 200-plus yard rushing performances during the season... offensive ranked 25th in the FCS in passing offense and third in the Big South/OVC in total offense at 373 yards per game...

**JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Was a one-year member of the Iowa Western CC football program helping them win the NJCAA National Championship in 2022… blocked for an offensive unit that averaged 31.3 points per game with 354.8 yards per game of total offense (200.8 rushing yards per game)…

**NAVY:** Began career at the US Naval Academy redshirting 2021 season with the Navy football program…

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played football at Jamestown HS as a four-sport athlete lettering in football, lacrosse, wrestling and basketball… was a two-time All-District and All-Conference selection in football…

**Misc.:** Father Bobby played football at Maine and was hired as the head coach at OVC member Tennessee Tech in the spring of 2023... previously served as the head coach at Old Dominion from 2007-19 restarting the Monarchs program and leading them from FCS to FBS and a 2016 Bahamas Bowl victory…

## 41 -- Peyton Wilkerson

**Defensive Line • 6-1 • 250 • RS-Freshman**
**Mokena, Ill. (Lincoln-Way Central HS)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Did not play in any games during the 2023 season, used redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played defensive line for coach Jeremy Cordell at Lincoln-Way Central High School… was a starter during senior year finishing season with seven tackles for loss… rated a two-star recruit by Rivals.com…

**Misc.:** Son of EIU head coach Chris Wilkerson… father Chris (football) and mother Sharna (softball) both played at Eastern Illinois…

## 12 -- Collin Willard

**Wide Receiver • 5-11 • 200 • Freshman**
**North Olmsted, Ohio (North Olmsted HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Tim Brediger at North Olmsted HS… earned second team All-District honors as a senior… had a breakout game during senior year with 12 receptions for 264 yards and three touchdowns against Westlake High… earned second team Great Lakes Conference… as a junior hauled in 51 passes for 911 yards and 12 touchdowns…

## 13 -- Cooper Willman

**Wide Receiver • 6-1 • 205 • Graduate Student**
**Sterling, Ill. (Sterling HS)**



**2022 - 2nd Team All-OVC (Punt Returner)**

**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in four games during the 2023 season... started season opening game at Indiana State suffering injury in game... returned to play three games in middle of year before taking redshirt season under NCAA participation rules... had five catches for 53 yards in opener at Indiana State... added one more catch against UT Martin to finish year with six catches for 69 yards... had one punt return for nine yards at Northwestern State...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Started all 11 games at wide receiver during the 2022 season... named second team All-Ohio Valley Conference at punt returner as team ranked first in the OVC and 24th in the FCS in punt return average... had seven total returns for 94 yards for an average of 13.4 yards per punt return... long punt return was 55 yards at Murray State... had 15 receptions for 182 yards during the season... season high seven receptions for 82 yards at McNeese... season long reception was 34 yards in season opener at Northern Illinois... added two rushes for 23 yards in final regular season game at nationally ranked UT Martin... had one pass completion for 25 yards against Lindenwood... was successful on two-point conversion attempt at McNeese...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Played in all 11 games during the 2021 season... made two starts at wide receiver while becoming primary punt returner late in season... had 11 receptions for 108 yards during the year... season high three catches in win at Tennessee Tech... season high 26 yards on two catches at Austin Peay... season long reception was 20 yards against Illinois State... had six punt returns for 32 yards (5.3 average) with a long punt return of 18 yards against Tennessee State... had two kickoff returns for 48 yards (24 average)...

**2020 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in all six games during the 2020 season played during the spring of 2021... saw a majority of time on special teams unit... lone statistic for season was a pass reception for four yards in final game of the season against Jacksonville State...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Jon Schlemmer at Sterling HS… was a dual-threat quarterback leading team to an 11-1 record advancing to the second round of the IHSA Class 5A state playoffs… through the air passed for 994 yards and six touchdowns… on the ground led the team with 1,269 yards and 15 touchdowns as the offense averaged 40.2 points per game… named the Area Player of the Year… also served as team's punter averaging 41 yards per punt with 12 downed inside the 20… also earned varsity letters in basketball and baseball…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR WILLMAN ...**

| YEAR | G | RCPTs | YDs | YDs/REC | TDs | PR | PRYds/Avg |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 | 6/0 | 1 | 4 | 4.0 | 0 | 0 | --- |
| 2021 | 11/2 | 11 | 108 | 9.8 | 0 | 6 | 32 (5.3) |
| 2022 | 11/11 | 16 | 199 | 12.4 | 0 | 7 | 94 (13.4) |
| 2023 | 4/1 | 6 | 69 | 11.5 | 0 | 1 | 9 (9.0) |
| **Career** | **32/14** | **34** | **380** | **11.1** | **0** | **14** | **135 (9.5)** |

## 26 -- Makhi Wilson

**Safety • 6-0 • 185 • RS-Freshman**
**Bettendorf, Iowa (Pleasant Valley HS)**



**2023 (FRESHMAN):** Did not play in any games during the 2023 season, used redshirt season...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played running back and safety for coach Rusty VanWetzinga at Pleasant Valley High School… helped team post a 10-1 record… earned first team All-State honors as a safety… as a versatile athlete rushed for 596 yards with three interceptions and a kickoff return for touchdown… lettered in track advancing to the Iowa State Championships in the 100 dash and 110 meter hurdles… grew up as a member of a military family with father active in the US Army…

## 15 -- Connor Wolf

**Quarterback • 6-3 • 205 • Freshman**
**Ada, Mich. (Grand Rapids Central Catholic HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Todd Kolster at Grand Rapids Catholic Central HS… earned Michigan Division 5 All-State honors as a senior passing for 2,363 yards and 25 touchdowns while rushing for another 439 yards and ten scores… led team to a 13-1 record and Michigan Division 5 State Championship as a senior rushing for all three scores in the 21-7 title game win… twice named an OK-Gold All-Conference selection…

## 31 -- Johnovan Wysinger

**Wide Receiver • 6-1 • 170 • Freshman**
**Chicago, Ill. (Morgan Park HS)**



**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played for coach Chris James at Morgan Park HS… helped lead team to back-to-back 10-2 records… team reached IHSA Class 5A state quarterfinals in both junior and senior seasons… averaged 19.2 yards per reception hauling in 21 passes for 406 yards and six touchdowns as a senior…

## 29 -- Kendi Young

**Running Back • 5-11 • 210 • Graduate Student**
**Calumet City, Ill. (Thornton Fractional North HS)**



**2023 (JUNIOR):** Played in seven games during the 2023 season as a reserve running back... finished season with 152 yards... season high 12 carries in home win over Bryant rushing for 73 yards... added 45 yards on nine carries at Lindenwood with a 4.0 yards per carry average for the season... added three catches for 24 yards...

**2022 (SOPHOMORE):** Appeared in five games during the 2022 season... made one start at running back against Tennessee Tech missing portions of the season due to injury... rushed for 280 yards on 41 carries for an average of 6.8 yards per carry... had breakout game with 160 yards on 8 carries including one touchdown in OVC opening win at Murray State... had a season long rush of 43 yards at Murray State... had 47 yards on ten carries in next outing against Northwestern State...

**2021 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in eight games during the 2021 season... saw time as a reserve running back and on special teams... rushed for 79 yards on 23 carries (3.4 yards per carry average)... had 28 yards on six carries in season opener at Indiana State... had 28 yards on five carries at Murray State... season long rush was 26 yards at Murray State... catuch one pass for three yards at Dayton...

**2020 (FRESHMAN):** Appeared in three games during the 2020 season played in the spring of 2021... rushed for 121 yards on 25 carries during the season... had a 72-yard touchdown run in collegiate debut against Southeast Missouri finishing game with 88 yards on 11 carries... rushed for 17 yards in home win over Tennessee Tech and 16 yards at Murray State...

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Played running back for coach Tristan Stovall at Thornton Fractional North HS… recorded over 1,000 all-purpose yards as a senior with ten touchdowns earning conference co-Offensive Player of the Year honors as a junior… named honorable mention All-Area…

**CAREER STATISTICS FOR YOUNG ...**

| YEAR | G | RUSH | YDS | TD | LNG |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 | 3 | 25 | 121 | 1 | 72 |
| 2021 | 8 | 23 | 79 | 0 | 26 |
| 2022 | 5 | 41 | 280 | 1 | 43 |
| 2023 | 7 | 38 | 162 | 0 | 20 |
| **Career** | **18** | **86** | **362** | **1** | **72** |