



# FIGHTING ILLINI

## FOOTBALL



### QUICK FACTS

#### UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

**Location:** Urbana-Champaign (140,000)  
**Founded:** 1867  
**Enrollment:** 56,299  
**Colors:** Orange & Blue  
**Nickname:** Fighting Illini  
**Conference:** Big Ten (West Division)  
**President:** Timothy L. Killeen  
**Chancellor:** Robert J. Jones  
**Director of Athletics:** Josh Whitman  
**Stadium:** Memorial Stadium (FieldTurf – 60,670)

#### COACHING STAFF

**Head Coach:** Bret Bielema

Alma Mater: Iowa  
 Record at Illinois: Second season  
 Overall Record: 102-65 (.611) in 13 seasons  
 Record at Illinois: 5-7 (.417) in one season

#### Assistant Coaches:

**Ryan Walters:** Defensive Coordinator  
**Barry Lunney Jr.:** Offensive Coordinator/QB  
**George McDonald:** Assistant Head Coach/WR  
**Kevin Kane:** Associate Head Coach/OLB  
**Bart Miller:** Offensive Line  
**Andy Buh:** Linebackers  
**Terrance Jamison:** Defensive Line  
**Aaron Henry:** Defensive Backs  
**Ben Miller:** Special Teams Coordinator/TE  
**Cory Patterson:** Running Backs  
**Sean Snyder:** Special Teams Coordinator/Specialists

#### FOOTBALL INFORMATION

**2021 Record:** 5-7, 4-5 (5th, Big Ten West Division)  
**2021 Starters Returning/Lost:** 11/11  
 Off: 6/5    Def: 5/6    ST (K/P/LS): 0/3  
**All-Time Record (Years Played):** 619-613-51 (132)  
**All-Time Big Ten Record (Years):** 354-449-32 (126)  
**Memorial Stadium Record (Years):** 279-250-14 (99)  
**Big Ten Championships (Last):** 15 (2001)  
**National Championships (Last):** 5 (1951)  
**Bowl Appearances (Last):** 19 (2019 Redbox Bowl)  
**All-Time Bowl Record:** 8-11

#### FOOTBALL CONTACT INFORMATION

**Office Phone:** 217-333-1400  
**Mailing Address:** Smith Football Center  
 1501 S. Fourth Street, Champaign, IL 61820

#### FOLLOW THE ILLINI

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### 2022 ILLINOIS SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	2021 RECORD	SERIES HISTORY (LAST)
Aug. 27	Wyoming	Memorial Stadium	7-6	First meeting
Sept. 2	at Indiana	Bloomington, Indiana	2-10 (0-9)	44-24-3 (2017)
Sept. 10	Virginia	Memorial Stadium	6-6	2-1 (2021)
Sept. 22	Chattanooga	Memorial Stadium	6-5	First meeting
Oct. 1	at Wisconsin	Madison, Wisconsin	9-4 (6-3)	38-44-7 (2021)
Oct. 8	Iowa	Memorial Stadium	10-4 (7-2)	38-37-2 (2021)
Oct. 15	Minnesota	Memorial Stadium	9-4 (6-3)	31-40-3 (2021)
Oct. 29	at Nebraska	Lincoln, Nebraska	3-9 (1-8)	5-13-1 (2021)
Nov. 5	Michigan State	Memorial Stadium	11-2 (7-2)	19-26-2 (2019)
Nov. 12	Purdue	Memorial Stadium	9-4 (6-3)	45-46-6 (2021)
Nov. 19	at Michigan	Ann Arbor, Michigan	12-2 (8-10)	23-71-2 (2019)
Nov. 26	at Northwestern	Evanston, Illinois	3-9 (1-8)	56-54-5 (2021)
Dec. 3	Big Ten Championship	Indianapolis, Indiana		

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 71 Tank Wright, Director of Football Strength and Conditioning  
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 74 Pete Roley, Director of Football Operations  
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#### CREDITS

Executive Editor: Kent Brown  
 Editor: Danny Mattie  
 Cover Designs: Paige Apkarian  
 Photography: David Craan, Darrell Hoemann, Cary Frye, Mark Jones, Bradley Leeb, Craig Pessman, Della Perrone  
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## Big Wins in Bielema's Year One

- Bret Bielema became the first first-year head coach in Illinois history to win two top-25 ranked games. The Illini had marquee wins at #7 (AP) Penn State, in the longest game in college football history, and at #20 (CFP) Minnesota, in Illinois' first ever College Football Playoff ranked win.
- The Illini were one of four teams to win two AP/CFP ranked road games in 2021 (Boise State, Fresno State, Mississippi State).
- Illinois had as many AP/CFP ranked wins in 2021 (2) as the last 12 years combined.
- Illinois tied for its most Big Ten wins (4) since the 2007 team went 6-2 en route to the Rose Bowl (tied with 2010, 2013, 2019).
- Illinois dominated Northwestern, 47-14, in the season finale for the Illini's first win in the Land of Lincoln Trophy rivalry game since 2015, snapping a six-game losing streak.
- According to ESPN's SP+ metric, Illinois had its best season since 2011 and eighth-best season in the last 25 years.

## Defensive Improvement

- Illinois announced a contract extension for defensive coordinator Ryan Walters on Nov. 14, after Walters helped Illinois have one of the best defensive turnarounds in all of college football.
- Illinois' defense has made a 13.0-point improvement from 2020 (34.9 ppg to 21.9 ppg). The 13.0 ppg improvement was the program's third-best improvement since 1950.
- Illinois' scoring defense (31st from 97th), total defense (32nd from 89th), and third-down defense (51st from 114th) all improved 50 or more spots in the national rankings.
- Illinois allowed only 18.9 points in Big Ten games, the fourth-best in the conference. In 2020, Illinois allowed 34.9 points allowed per Big Ten game, ranking last in the conference.
- Illinois' Big Ten defensive ranks in conference play improved 7+ spots in points per game (4th from 14th), touchdowns allowed (t-3rd from 14th), yards per play (4th from 13th), yards per game (5th from 14th), rush yards per carry (7th from 14th), pass yards per throw (4th from 14th), and pass yards per game (1st from 10th).
- Illinois held nine of its 12 opponents under their season scoring average.
- Illinois' total defense improved by 101.0 yards per game (467.3 to 366.3). The 101.0 ypg improvement was the program's fourth-best improvement since 1950.
- Illinois' defense allowed only 48 points (12.0 per game) in regulation of its four Big Ten road games in 2021, including only four TDs by opposing offenses in Big Ten road games.
- Illinois allowed only 2.5 yards per carry in Big Ten road games in 2021 (142 carries, 361 yards) and only 1.7 yards per carry in the fourth quarter of those games (31 carries, 52 yards).
- Illinois had a streak of holding opponents to 24 points or fewer in seven straight games.

## Chase Brown Chases History

- Chase Brown became the 14th 1,000-yard rusher in program history when he broke the 1,000-yard mark in the season finale against Northwestern. He finished the season with 1,005 rushing yards on 170 carries (5.9 per carry) and five touchdowns.
- Brown is the 14th 1,000-yard rusher coached by Bret Bielema in his 13-year head coaching career.
- Brown's 223-yard rushing game at Penn State marked his second game of the season with 200+ yards (257 vs. Charlotte). He joined Howard Griffith (1990) and Rashard Mendenhall (2007) as the only players in Illinois history with multiple 200-yard rushing games in a single season.
- Brown's 223 rushing yards at Penn State were the most ever by an opponent at Beaver Stadium and the fourth-most ever against Penn State.
- Brown's 147 rushing yards at Minnesota were the most by an opponent at Minnesota since 2017.
- Brown is the first Illini in history to run for 220+ yards twice in a career. He did it in the span of three games during the 2021 season.
- Brown led the nation in yards after contact in Week 8 with 145 at Penn State, according to PFF. He led the nation in yards after contact twice in a four-week span in October and he was the only running back to lead the nation in yards after contact twice in 2021.
- Brown was 23rd in the nation and third in the Big Ten in rushing yards per game (100.5).
- Brown has 1,566 rushing yards for his career at Illinois, No. 25 on Illinois' all-time career rushing list. Brown also tallied 352 yards as a freshman at Western Michigan for 1,806 for his collegiate career.



## All-Big Ten

- DB Kerby Joseph » First Team (media), Second Team (coaches)
- C Doug Kramer » Second Team (coaches), Honorable Mention (media)
- RB Chase Brown » Third Team (coaches and media)
- K James McCourt » Third Team (coaches), Honorable Mention (media)
- P Blake Hayes » Third Team (coaches), Honorable Mention (media)
- DB Sydney Brown » Honorable Mention (coaches and media)
- OLB Owen Carney Jr. » Honorable Mention (coaches and media)
- OL Vederian Lowe » Honorable Mention (coaches and media)
- OL Alex Palczewski » Honorable Mention (coaches and media)
- DL Jer'Zhan Newton » Honorable Mention (media)
- DL Keith Randolph Jr. » Honorable Mention (media)
- DB Devon Witherspoon » Honorable Mention (media)

## The Longest Game in College Football History

- Illinois won the longest game in college football history, a 20-18 victory at #7 Penn State 10/23/21 in nine overtimes, breaking the previous record of seven overtimes.
- Illinois was named the National Team of the Week by the Football Writers Association of America.
- The victory over #7 Penn State was Illinois' second in a row over a top-10 opponent (vs. #6 Wisconsin, 24-23, 10/19/2019).
- It was Illinois' first road win over a ranked opponent since 11/10/2007 at #1 Ohio State (28-21).
- The win marked the 100th career victory for head coach Bret Bielema.
- The Fighting Illini outgained the Nittany Lions 395-227 including a 357-62 edge in rushing yards and an advantage in time of possession of 36:25 to 23:35.
- Illinois' 357 rushing yards were the most ever by an opponent in a Big Ten game at Beaver Stadium.

## Ground Game

- Chase Brown and Josh McCray are one of only six running back duos returning to college football that produced a 1,000-yard/500-yard combo season last year.
- Illinois is one of nine programs returning its leading rusher and leading receiver from 2021.
- Illinois lined up with seven offensive linemen for 24 snaps at Penn State, leading to the most ever rushing yards by an opposing team at Beaver Stadium in a Big Ten game (357 rushing yards). The "barge" package produced 129 yards (5.4 yards/carry) and nine first downs.
- Illinois was 4-0 when it ran the ball 46+ times.
- Brown had two of the nation's top 17 rushing games of the season. He and Michigan State's Kenneth Walker III were the only running backs with two of the top 17 highest rushing games.
- Brown rushed for a career-high 257 yards against Charlotte, the fourth-most in a game in Illinois history, and 223 yards at Penn State, the seventh-most in a game in Illinois history.
- Brown's 257 yards were the seventh-most by a running back in college football last season.
- Brown's 257 yards were the most by a RB coached by Bret Bielema in his 13 years as a head coach.
- Brown led the nation in yards after contact in Week 8 with 145 at Penn State, according to PFF. He led the nation in yards after contact twice in a four-week span in October and he was the only running back to lead the nation in yards after contact twice in 2021.
- Brown had 200 yards after contact against Charlotte according to PFF, the most yards after contact in all of college football in Week 5 and tied for the fifth-most yards after contact in a game during the 2021 season.
- Josh McCray ran for a career-best 156 yards on 24 carries at Purdue 9/25/21. It was the fourth-most rushing yards by a true freshman in program history.
- McCray had 144 yards after contact at Purdue according to PFF, the second-most yards after contact in Week 4. He had another 100 yards after contact at Penn State.
- McCray's 156 rushing yards at Purdue were the fifth-most by a true freshman in 2021.
- McCray's 156 rushing yards at Purdue were the most by a true freshman in a road game in 2021.

## Takeaway King

- Kerby Joseph was the only player in the nation with 5+ interceptions and 3+ fumble recoveries.
- Joseph tied for the national lead in interceptions (5) and was third in fumble recoveries (3) during the regular season.
- Joseph was the #1 graded defensive back in the nation by PFF and the #5 defender in the nation.
- Joseph was the first Big Ten player since 1999 to record 5+ interceptions and 3+ fumble recoveries in a single season (Illinois' Muhammad Abdullah) and one of only three Illini in the last 50 years.

## ILLINOIS CAREER STARTS RETURNERS

PLAYER	'21	'20	'19	'18	'17	TOT
Palczewski, Alex	12	4	13	12	11	52
Brown, Sydney	12	6	10	10	---	38
Martin, Jartavius	8	2	5	8	---	23
Witherspoon, Devon	10	6	3	---	---	19
Woods, Jamal	1	3	5	4	4	16
Brown, Chase	9	6	0	0	---	15
Pearl, Julian	11	4	---	---	---	15
Newton, Jer'Zhan	11	3	---	---	---	14
Ford, Luke	12	2	---	---	---	14
Barnes, Tarique	10	2	0	---	---	12
Washington, Casey	5	1	5	---	---	11
Williams, Isaiah	5	4	---	---	---	9
Brown, Verdis	0	8	0	---	---	8
Hightower, Brian	1	7	---	---	---	8
Coleman, Seth	3	4	0	---	---	7
Pihlstrom, Alex	5	2	0	---	---	7
Randolph, Keith	7	0	0	---	---	7
Marchese, Michael	1	2	0	3	0	6
Avery, Calvin	2	2	---	---	---	4
Bryant, Pat	3	---	---	---	---	3
Reiman, Tip	3	0	---	---	---	3
Sitkowski, Artur	3	---	---	---	---	3
Barnes, Bryce	0	2	---	---	---	2
Nicholson, Tahveon	2	---	---	---	---	2
Barlev, Zach	1	---	---	---	---	1
Hart Jr., Calvin	1	---	---	---	---	1
McCray, Josh	1	---	---	---	---	1
Pate, Deon	0	0	0	1	---	1
Scott, Miles	1	---	---	---	---	1
Slaughter, Jordyn	0	1	---	---	---	1
Smith, Kendall	1	0	0	0	---	1

-- = Redshirted/did not play/not on squad; 0 = Played, didn't start

## Carney Among Big Ten Leaders

- Owen Carney Jr. had 6.5 sacks on the season, ranking 10th in the Big Ten in sacks.
- Carney finished ninth in Illini history in career sacks with 16.0.
- Carney passed his career high for sacks in a season (5.0, 2020).

## Isaiah's Big Game

- Isaiah Gay had 5.5 TFLs at Iowa, the third-most TFLs in a game in Illinois history.
- Gay's 5.5 TFLs set the Illinois record for TFLs in a Big Ten game.
- Gay's 5.5 TFLs tied for the most TFLs in a Big Ten game in 2021 (Purdue's Leo Chenal, 5.5, at Wisconsin) and tied for the most TFLs in a Power-5 vs. Power-5 game in 2021.
- Gay's 5.5 TFLs were the second-most TFLs in a game in college football this season (Missouri's Blaze Alldredge, 6.0, vs. Central Michigan).

## Man of the Year

- Vederian Lowe was one of 20 semifinalists for the Jason Witten Man of the Year Award, the college football version of the NFL's Walter Payton Man of the Year Award.
- Lowe and his wife Haylee have two children, Kingston and Trey. They adopted Lowe's younger brother, Vydalis, after the passing of their mother, Veneka, and gained guardianship in 2021.

## Hayes - Ray Guy Semifinalist

- Illinois P Blake Hayes was one of 10 semifinalists for the Ray Guy Award.
- Hayes left Champaign with nearly every Illinois record. He is the Illinois record holder in career punting average, career punt yards, career punts inside the 20, career 50+ yard punts, season punt yards, season punts inside the 20, and season 50+ yard punts.

## Isaiah Williams - QB Turned WR

- Isaiah Williams transitioned from quarterback to wide receiver in 2021 and became Illinois' leading receiver.
- Isaiah Williams led the team in receptions (47) and receiving yards (525).
- Williams was third among Power-5 freshmen in receptions (47), behind only Texas' Xavier Worthy (62) and Georgia's Brock Bowers (56).
- Williams ranked ninth in the nation in receptions per game among freshmen (3.9).
- Williams was 14th in the Big Ten in receptions per game (3.6) and 20th in receiving yards per game (43.8).

## Offensive Line Notes

- Illinois was 12th in the nation in run blocking grade, according to PFF (86.0).
- Doug Kramer was the No. 28 graded center in the nation according to PFF (75.4) (min. 500 snaps). Kramer had the No. 23 run blocking grade in the nation among centers (78.7).
- Alex Palczewski was the No. 37 graded tackle in the nation according to PFF (79.4) (min. 500 snaps), although he played guard in the last five games. Palczewski had the No. 13 run blocking grade in the nation among tackles (89.2).
- Vederian Lowe was the No. 33 graded tackle in the nation according to PFF (80.2) (min. 500 snaps). Lowe was the highest graded offensive lineman in the nation in Week 5 against Charlotte (93.7).
- Jack Badovinac was the No. 32 graded guard in the nation according to PFF (76.6) (min. 500 snaps).
- Julian Pearl had the No. 66 run blocking grade in the nation among tackles (74.5).

## Late Losses

- Four of Illinois' seven losses came when Illinois had a chance to win on its final drive.
  - » vs. UTSA - Drive stopped at the 30 with 0:00 left while trailing by 7
  - » vs. Maryland - Loss on a 32-yard field goal with 0:00 left
  - » at Purdue - Drive stopped at the 19 with 0:40 left while trailing by 4
  - » vs. Rutgers - Drive stopped at the 34 with 1:08 left while trailing by 6

## NFL Draft Results

### Drafted

- » Kerby Joseph - Detroit Lions (3rd round)
- » Vederian Lowe - Minnesota Vikings (6th round)
- » Doug Kramer - Chicago Bears (6th round)

### Free Agent Signings

- » Tony Adams - New York Jets (free agent)
- » Owen Carney - Miami Dolphins (free agent)
- » Jake Hansen - Houston Texas (free agent)
- » James McCourt - Los Angeles Chargers (free agent)
- » Roderick Perry II - Cleveland Browns (free agent)
- » Brandon Peters - Los Angeles Chargers (free agent)
- » Khalan Tolson - Carolina Panthers (free agent)

**ILLINI NCAA & B1G RANKINGS**

**TEAM RANKINGS (130 teams ranked)**

CATEGORY	NCAA	B1G	STAT
3rd Down Conversion Pct	.80	.9	0.380
3rd Down Conversion Pct Defense	.32	.5	0.353
4th Down Conversion Pct	.119	.13	0.357
4th Down Conversion Pct Defense	.123	.14	0.722
Completion Percentage	.125	.13	0.512
Defensive Touchdowns	.62	.7	.1
Fewest Penalties	.18	.6	.61
Fewest Penalties Per Game	.28	.8	5.08
Fewest Penalty Yards	.55	.11	.633
Fewest Penalty Yards Per Game	.65	.11	52.75
First Downs Defense	.49	.7	.252
<b>First Downs Offense</b>	.114	.12	.212
Fumbles Lost	.20	.4	.5
Fumbles Recovered	.26	.4	.9
Kickoff Return Defense	.127	.13	26.78
Kickoff Returns	.118	.10	16.33
Net Punting	.12	.4	44.06
Passes Had Intercepted	.15	.1	.6
Passes Intercepted	.80	.8	.9
Passing Offense	.122	.14	156.2
Passing Yards Allowed	.43	.7	215.2
Passing Yards per Completion	.95	.9	11.36
Punt Return Defense	.17	.4	3.70
Punt Returns	.86	.10	7.00
Red Zone Defense	.69	.10	0.837
Red Zone Offense	.104	.8	0.774
Rushing Defense	.63	.9	150.4
Rushing Offense	.55	.7	173.6
Sacks Allowed	.44	.7	1.92
Scoring Defense	.29	.6	21.9
Scoring Offense	.115	.11	20.2
Tackles for Loss Allowed	.36	.5	4.92
Team Passing Efficiency	.121	.12	109.73
Team Passing Efficiency Defense	.32	.6	124.38
Team Sacks	.49	.4	2.50
Team Tackles for Loss	.82	.8	5.3
Time of Possession	.83	.9	29:20
Total Defense	.46	.6	365.6
Total Offense	.112	.10	329.8
Turnover Margin	.22	.3	0.58
Turnovers Gained	.53	.6	.18
Turnovers Lost	.10	.1	.11
Winning Percentage	.85	.10	0.417

**NCAA INDIVIDUAL RANKINGS (Top-75)**

CATEGORY	PLAYER	STAT	RANK
All Purpose Yards	C. Brown	114.7	46th
Field Goal Percentage	McCourt	0.783	52nd
Field Goal Per Game	McCourt	1.50	26th
Fumbles Recovered	Joseph	3	3rd
	Gay	2	22nd
Interceptions Per Game	Joseph	0.4	5th
Punt Returns	Navarro	7.6	29th
Passing Yards Per Completion	Peters	12.86	43rd
Punting	Hayes	45.1	20th
Rush Yards per Carry	C. Brown	5.91	27th
Rushing Yards	C. Brown	1005	51st
Rushing Yards Per Game	C. Brown	100.5	23rd
Sacks	Carney	0.54	66th
Total Interceptions	Joseph	5	2nd

**BIG TEN INDIVIDUAL RANKINGS (Top-10)**

CATEGORY	PLAYER	STAT	RANK
All Purpose	C. Brown	114.7	7th
Field Goal Percentage	McCourt	0.783	5th
Field Goals Per Game	McCourt	1.50	5th
Fumble Recovered	Joseph	3	1st
	Gay	2	3rd
Interceptions Per Game	Joseph	0.4	2nd
Passing Yards Per Completion	Peters	12.86	5th
Punt Returns	Navarro	7.6	4th
Punting	Hayes	45.1	6th
Yards Per Carry	C. Brown	5.91	5th
	McCray	4.90	9th
Rushing Yards	C. Brown	1005	7th
Rushing Yards Per Game	C. Brown	100.5	3rd
Sacks	Carney Jr.	0.54	6th
Total Interceptions	Joseph	5	2nd
Yards Per Pass Attempt	Peters	6.92	9th

**2021 FINAL AP TOP 25**

Rk	Last	Team	Conf.	W-L	Pts.	Coaches Poll	Last Bowl
1	3	Georgia (61)	SEC	14-1	1525	*1	W 33-18 N #1 Alabama (CFP)
2	1	Alabama	SEC	13-2	1464	2	L 33-18 N #3 Georgia (CFP)
3	2	Michigan	Big Ten	12-2	1361	3	L 34-11 N #3 Georgia (Orange)
4	4	Cincinnati	AAC	13-1	1349	4	L 27-6 N #1 Alabama (Cotton)
5	6	Baylor	Big 12	12-2	1259	6	W 21-7 N #8 Mississippi (Sugar)
6	7	Ohio State	Big Ten	11-2	1247	5	W 48-45 N #10 Utah (Rose)
7	9	Oklahoma State	Big 12	12-2	1177	7	W 37-35 N #5 Notre Dame (Fiesta)
8	5	Notre Dame	Ind	11-2	1039	9	L 37-35 N #9 OK State (Fiesta)
9	11	Michigan State	Big Ten	11-2	1026	8	W 31-21 N #13 Pittsburgh (Peach)
10	14	Oklahoma	Big 12	11-2	966	10	W 47-32 N #15 Oregon (Alamo)
11	8	Mississippi	SEC	10-3	926	11	L 21-7 N #6 Baylor (Sugar)
12	10	Utah	Pac-12	10-4	851	12	L 48-45 N #7 Ohio State (Rose)
13	13	Pittsburgh	ACC	11-3	741	13	L 31-21 N #11 MSU (Peach)
14	19	Clemson	ACC	10-3	538	16	W 20-13 N Iowa State (Cheez-It)
15	20	Wake Forest	ACC	11-3	533	14	W 38-10 N Rutgers (Gator)
16	16	Louisiana	Sun Belt	13-1	517	18	W 36-21 N Marshall (New Orleans)
17	21	Houston	AAC	12-2	513	17	W 17-13 N Auburn (Birmingham)
18	25	Kentucky	SEC	10-3	446	15	W 20-17 N #17 Iowa (Citrus)
19	12	BYU	Ind	10-3	435	22	L 31-28 N UAB (Independence)
20	18	NC State	ACC	9-3	382	19	Canceled vs. UCLA (Holiday)
21	22	Arkansas	SEC	9-4	371	20	W 24-10 N Penn State (Outback)
22	15	Oregon	Pac-12	10-4	364	21	L 47-32 N #14 Oklahoma (Alamo)
23	17	Iowa	Big Ten	10-4	171	23	L 20-17 N #25 Kentucky (Citrus)
24	NR	Utah State	MWC	11-3	163	24	W 24-13 N Oregon State (LA)
25	NR	San Diego State	MWC	12-2	137	RV	W 38-24 N #24 UTSA (Frisco)

**2021 BIG TEN STANDINGS**

WEST DIVISION	B1G	PCT.	HOME	AWAY	DIV	STREAK	OVERALL	PCT.	HOME	AWAY	NEUT	STREAK
Iowa	7-2	0.778	4-1	3-1	4-2	W4	10-4	0.714	6-1	4-1	0-2	L2
Wisconsin	6-3	0.667	3-2	3-1	5-1	L1	9-4	0.692	5-2	3-1	1-1	W1
Minnesota	6-3	0.667	3-2	3-1	4-2	W2	9-4	0.692	4-3	4-1	1-0	W3
Purdue	6-3	0.667	3-2	3-1	4-2	W2	9-4	0.692	4-2	4-2	1-0	W3
Illinois	4-5	0.444	2-3	2-2	3-3	W1	5-7	0.417	3-4	2-3	0-0	W1
Nebraska	1-8	0.111	1-4	0-4	1-5	L6	3-9	0.250	3-4	0-5	0-0	L6
Northwestern	1-8	0.111	1-4	0-4	0-6	L6	3-9	0.250	3-4	0-5	0-0	L6
<b>EAST DIVISION</b>												
Michigan	8-1	0.889	4-0	4-1	5-1	W4	12-2	0.857	7-0	4-1	1-1	L1
Ohio State	8-1	0.889	4-0	4-1	5-1	L1	11-2	0.846	6-1	4-1	1-0	W1
Michigan State	7-2	0.778	4-0	3-2	5-1	W1	11-2	0.846	6-0	4-2	1-0	W2
Penn State	4-5	0.444	2-2	2-3	3-3	L1	7-6	0.538	5-3	2-3	0-0	L2
Maryland	3-6	0.333	1-3	2-3	2-4	W1	7-6	0.538	4-3	2-3	1-0	W2
Rutgers	2-7	0.222	0-4	2-3	1-5	L2	5-8	0.385	2-4	3-3	0-1	L3
Indiana	0-9	0.000	0-4	0-5	0-6	L9	2-10	0.167	1-5	1-5	0-0	L8

## 2021 STARTERS BY POSITION

## OFFENSE

Pos.	#	Player	Starts
QB	18	Brandon Peters	9
	9	Artur Sitkowski	3
RB	2	Chase Brown	9
	26	Mike Epstein	1
	3	Jakari Norwood	1
	0	Josh McCray	1
WR	11	Carlos Sandy	5
	14	Casey Washington	5
	1	Isaiah Williams	5
	13	Pat Bryant	3
	86	Donny Navarro	4
	19	Dalevon Campbell	1
	7	Brian Hightower	1
	85	Miles Scott	1
TE	82	Luke Ford	12
	87	Daniel Barker	5
	89	Tip Reiman	3
	42	Michael Marchese	1
OL	79	Vederian Lowe	12
	63	Alex Palczewski	12
	65	Doug Kramer	12
	54	Julian Pearl	11
	72	Jack Badovinac	7
	75	Alex Pihlstrom	5
	55	Blake Jeresaty	4
	68	Zach Barlev	1

## DEFENSE

Pos.	#	Player	Starts
OLB	99	Owen Carney	12
	92	Isaiah Gay	7
	49	Seth Coleman	3
DT	94	Jer'Zhan Newton	11
	96	Roderick Perry	8
	88	Keith Randolph	7
	93	Calvin Avery	2
	91	Jamal Woods	1
LB	44	Tarique Barnes	10
	45	Khalan Tolson	8
	35	Jake Hansen	5
	5	Calvin Hart	1
	46	Alec McEachern	1
CB	6	Tony Adams	11
	31	Devin Witherspoon	10
	10	Tahveon Nicholson	2
	7	Kendall Smith	1
S	30	Sydney Brown	12
	25	Kerby Joseph	10
	21	Jartavius Martin	8

## SPECIAL TEAMS

Pos.	#	Player	Starts
K	17	James McCourt	12
P	14	Blake Hayes	12
LS	56	Ethan Tabel	12

## TEAM/INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

## Team Results

	Date	Opponent		Score	Att.
*	08/28/2021	Nebraska	W	30-22	41064
	09/04/2021	UTSA	L	30-37	33906
	09/11/2021	at Virginia	L	14-42	36036
*	09/17/2021	Maryland	L	17-20	37168
*	09/25/2021	at Purdue	L	9-13	52840
	10/02/2021	Charlotte	W	24-14	30559
*	10/09/2021	Wisconsin	L	0-24	40168
*	10/23/2021	at Penn St.	Wot9	20-18	105001
*	10/30/2021	Rutgers	L	14-20	36942
*	11/06/2021	at Minnesota	W	14-6	46382
*	11/20/2021	at Iowa	L	23-33	64132
*	11/27/2021	Northwestern	W	47-14	27624

## Rushing

Player	gp	att	gain	loss	net	avg	td	lg	avg/g
Chase Brown	10	170	1023	18	1005	5.9	5	80	100.5
Josh McCray	11	112	564	15	549	4.9	2	38	49.9
Reggie Love III	10	44	164	6	158	3.6	0	33	15.8
Jakari Norwood	9	27	131	11	120	4.4	0	18	13.3
Mike Epstein	3	25	121	14	107	4.3	1	45	35.7
Isaiah Williams	12	12	62	1	61	5.1	2	21	5.1
Artur Sitkowski	5	26	87	56	31	1.2	0	14	6.2
Casey Washington	12	0	30	0	30	0.0	1	30	2.5
Chase Hayden	6	5	18	0	18	3.6	0	6	3.0
Daniel Barker	12	3	18	0	18	6.0	1	8	1.5
Team	12	6	0	14	-14	-2.3	0	0	-1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>2347</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>2083</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>173.6</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>2166</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>1805</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>150.4</b>

## Passing

Player	gp	effc	comp-att-int	pct	yds	td	lg	avg/g
Brandon Peters	10	120.9	91-169-4	53.8	1170	7	56	117.0
Artur Sitkowski	5	100.6	74-148-2	50.0	704	6	45	140.8
Casey Washington	12	0.0	0-2-0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0
Isaiah Williams	12	0.0	0-1-0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0
Caleb Griffin	2	0.0	0-1-0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0
Team	12	0.0	0-1-0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>109.7</b>	<b>165-322-6</b>	<b>51.2</b>	<b>1874</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>156.2</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>124.4</b>	<b>213-363-9</b>	<b>58.7</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>215.2</b>

## Receiving

Player	gp	no.	yds	avg	td	lg	avg/g
Isaiah Williams	12	47	525	11.2	4	52	43.8
Casey Washington	12	21	294	14.0	0	56	24.5
Daniel Barker	12	18	202	11.2	4	27	16.8
Donny Navarro	12	17	167	9.8	0	21	13.9
Luke Ford	12	15	114	7.6	2	19	9.5
Chase Brown	10	14	142	10.1	0	33	14.2
Pat Bryant	10	6	98	16.3	0	45	9.8
Deuce Spann	9	5	124	24.8	2	45	13.8
Carlos Sandy	12	4	16	4.0	0	9	1.3
Jakari Norwood	9	4	8	2.0	0	7	0.9
Dalevon Campbell	11	3	50	16.7	0	31	4.5
Tip Reiman	12	3	43	14.3	1	24	3.6
Mike Epstein	3	2	6	3.0	0	4	2.0
Michael Marchese	11	2	30	15.0	0	15	2.7
Reggie Love III	10	2	12	6.0	0	7	1.2
Josh McCray	11	2	43	21.5	0	40	3.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>1874</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>156.2</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>215.2</b>

## Game Records

Record	Overall	Home	Away	Neutral
ALL GAMES	5-7	3-4	2-3	0-0
CONFERENCE	4-5	2-3	2-2	0-0
NON-CONFERENCE	1-2	1-1	0-1	0-0

## Team Statistics

	ILLINI	OPP
<b>First Downs</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>252</b>
Rushing	102	117
Passing	88	119
Penalty	22	16
<b>Rushing Yardage</b>	<b>2083</b>	<b>1805</b>
Rushing attempts	468	478
Average per rush	4.5	3.8
Average per game	173.6	150.4
TDs Rushing	12	16
<b>Passing Yardage</b>	<b>1874</b>	<b>2582</b>
Comp-Att-Int	165-322-6	213-363-9
Average per pass	5.8	7.1
Average per catch	11.4	12.1
Average per game	156.2	215.2
TDs Passing	13	12
<b>Total offense</b>	<b>3957</b>	<b>4387</b>
Average per play	5.0	5.2
Average per game	329.8	365.6
<b>Kick returns: #-Yards</b>	<b>3-49</b>	<b>9-241</b>
<b>Punt returns: #-Yards</b>	<b>17-119</b>	<b>27-100</b>
<b>Int returns: #-Yards</b>	<b>9-39</b>	<b>6-42</b>
<b>Fumbles-Lost</b>	<b>12-6</b>	<b>13-8</b>
<b>Penalties-Yards</b>	<b>61-633</b>	<b>59-588</b>
<b>Punts-Avg</b>	<b>68-45.1</b>	<b>59-43.5</b>
<b>Time of possession / game</b>	<b>29:20</b>	<b>30:35</b>
<b>3rd-down conversion</b>	<b>68/179</b>	<b>59/167</b>
<b>4rd-down conversion</b>	<b>5/14</b>	<b>13/18</b>

## Interceptions

Player	no.	yds	avg	td	lg
Kerby Joseph	5	12	2.4	0	12
Keith Randolph Jr.	1	2	2.0	0	2
Tony Adams	1	0	0.0	0	0
Jartavius Martin	1	19	19.0	0	19
Tarique Barnes	1	6	6.0	0	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>32</b>

# INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

## Field Goals

Player	fg	pct.	01-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-99	lg	blk
James McCourt	18-23	78.3	0-0	5-6	5-5	4-4	4-8	53	1
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>18-26</b>	<b>69.2</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>8-10</b>	<b>2-6</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>0</b>

## Scoring

Player	td	fg	PAT					dxp	saf	pts
			kick	rush	rcv	pass				
James McCourt	-	18-23	26-26	-	-	-	-	-	-	80
Isaiah Williams	6	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	38
Daniel Barker	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Chase Brown	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Luke Ford	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Deuce Spann	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Josh McCray	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Casey Washington	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	8
Mike Epstein	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Calvin Hart Jr.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Tip Reiman	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>18-23</b>	<b>26-26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>242</b>	
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18-26</b>	<b>27-30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>263</b>	

## Score by Periods

Team	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	TOT
Illinois	36	102	54	40	10	242
Opponents	58	69	48	80	8	263

## Punting

Player	no.	yds	avg	lg	tb	fc	i20	50+	blk
Blake Hayes	68	3068	45.1	80	2	19	33	16	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>3068</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>2564</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>

## Punt Returns

Player	no.	yds	avg	td	lg
Donny Navarro	16	121	7.6	0	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>

## Kick Returns

Player	no.	yds	avg	td	lg
Donny Navarro	3	49	16.3	0	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>

## All Purpose

Player	g	rush	rcv	pr	kr	ir	total	avg/g
Chase Brown	10	1005	142	0	0	0	1147	114.7
Josh McCray	11	549	43	0	0	0	592	53.8
Isaiah Williams	12	61	525	0	0	0	586	48.8
Donny Navarro	12	0	167	121	49	0	337	28.1
Casey Washington	12	30	294	0	0	0	324	27.0
Daniel Barker	12	18	202	0	0	0	220	18.3
Reggie Love III	10	158	12	0	0	0	170	17.0
Jakari Norwood	9	120	8	0	0	0	128	14.2
Deuce Spann	9	0	124	0	0	0	124	13.8
Luke Ford	12	0	114	0	0	0	114	9.5
Mike Epstein	3	107	6	0	0	0	113	37.7
Pat Bryant	10	0	98	0	0	0	98	9.8
Dalevon Campbell	11	0	50	0	0	0	50	4.5
Tip Reiman	12	0	43	0	0	0	43	3.6
Artur Sitkowski	5	31	0	0	0	0	31	6.2
Michael Marchese	11	0	30	0	0	0	30	2.7
Jartavius Martin	12	0	0	0	0	19	19	1.6
Chase Hayden	6	18	0	0	0	0	18	3.0
Carlos Sandy	12	0	16	0	0	0	16	1.3
Kerby Joseph	12	0	0	0	0	12	12	1.0
Tarique Barnes	12	0	0	0	0	6	6	0.5
Keith Randolph Jr.	10	0	0	0	0	2	2	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2083</b>	<b>1874</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>4164</b>	<b>347.0</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1805</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>4770</b>	<b>397.5</b>

## Total Offense

Player	g	plays	rush	pass	total	avg/g
Brandon Peters	10	207	0	1170	1170	117.0
Chase Brown	10	170	1005	0	1005	100.5
Artur Sitkowski	5	174	31	704	735	147.0
Josh McCray	11	112	549	0	549	49.9
Reggie Love III	10	44	158	0	158	15.8
Jakari Norwood	9	27	120	0	120	13.3
Mike Epstein	3	25	107	0	107	35.7
Isaiah Williams	12	13	61	0	61	5.1
Casey Washington	12	2	30	0	30	2.5
Chase Hayden	6	5	18	0	18	3.0
Daniel Barker	12	3	18	0	18	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>2083</b>	<b>1874</b>	<b>3957</b>	<b>329.8</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>1805</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>4387</b>	<b>365.6</b>

## Team Defense

##	Player	gp	Tackles				tfl/yds	Sacks	Pass defense		Fumbles		blkd	
			ua	a	tot	no-yds		int-yds	brup	qbh	fr-yds	ff	kick	saf
30	Sydney Brown	12	50	31	81	1.5-6	1-5	.	3	.	.	2	.	.
44	Tarique Barnes	12	44	35	79	4.5-35	2-21	1-6	5	2	.	2	.	.
6	Tony Adams	12	47	16	63	2.5-13	1-8	1-0	5	.	.	.	.	.
25	Kerby Joseph	12	41	16	57	1-4	1-4	5-12	2	.	3-0	.	.	.

## DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

## Team Defense

##	Player	gp	Tackles				Sacks	Pass defense			Fumbles	blkd		
			ua	a	tot	tfl/yds	no-yds	int-yds	brup	qbh	fr-yds	ff	kick	saf
30	Sydney Brown	12	50	31	81	1.5-6	1-5	.	3	.	.	2	.	.
44	Tarique Barnes	12	44	35	79	4.5-35	2-21	1-6	5	2	.	2	.	.
6	Tony Adams	12	47	16	63	2.5-13	1-8	1-0	5	.	.	.	.	.
25	Kerby Joseph	12	41	16	57	1-4	1-4	5-12	2	.	3-0	.	.	.
21	Jartavius Martin	12	33	22	55	2.5-11	.	1-19	7	.	.	1	.	.
31	Devon Witherspoon	10	42	10	52	7-22	1-11	.	9	1	.	.	.	.
94	Jer'Zhan Newton	12	20	31	51	3.5-31	3.5-31	.	.	2	.	.	.	.
45	Khalan Tolson	12	28	21	49	3-8	1-6	.	2	1	.	.	.	.
92	Isaiah Gay	12	24	24	48	10-36	3-22	.	3	5	2-0	.	.	.
99	Owen Carney, Jr.	12	19	27	46	8-45	6.5-40	.	1	4	.	.	.	.
88	Keith Randolph Jr.	10	21	21	42	5.5-13	4-12	1-2	1	1	.	1	.	.
35	Jake Hansen	6	19	14	33	2.5-13	1-5	.	.	1	1-0	2	.	.
96	Roderick Perry	11	14	12	26	3-9	2-7	.	1	2	.	.	.	.
49	Seth Coleman	10	13	9	22	3-14	2-12	.	2	1	1-0	1	.	.
4	Derrick Smith	7	10	7	17	1-2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
24	Prather Hudson	11	8	6	14	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.
7	Kendall Smith	12	8	5	13	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
91	Jamal Woods	10	7	5	12	2-5	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
10	Tahveon Nicholson	8	9	2	11	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.
93	Calvin Avery	11	7	3	10	1-3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
46	Alec McEachern	12	5	4	9	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
38	Isaac Darkangelo	12	4	3	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
5	Calvin Hart Jr.	1	2	4	6	1.5-8	1-7	.	.	1	1-0	.	.	.
33	Ezekiel Holmes	12	2	3	5	1-1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
26	DJ Johnson	8	2	2	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
52	Verdis Brown	8	.	4	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
8	Eddie Smith	10	4	.	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
51	Sean Coghlan	9	1	3	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
42	Michael Marchese	11	1	2	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
48	Bryce Barnes	11	3	.	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
29	Christian Bobak	12	2	1	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
20	Tyler Strain	4	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
2	Chase Brown	10	2	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
32	Tailon Leitzsey	7	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>64-279</b>	<b>30-191</b>	<b>9-39</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8-0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
	Opponents	12	440	334	774	60-252	23-177	6-42	54	26	6-0	10	1	0

# INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

## Scoring

Player	td	fg	PAT				dpx	saf	pts
			kick	rush	rcv	pass			
James McCourt	-	18-23	26-26	-	-	-	-	-	80
Isaiah Williams	6	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	38
Daniel Barker	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Chase Brown	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Luke Ford	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Deuce Spann	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Josh McCray	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Casey Washington	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	8
Mike Epstein	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Calvin Hart Jr.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Tip Reiman	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>18-23</b>	<b>26-26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18-26</b>	<b>27-30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>263</b>

## Field Goals

Player	fg	pct.	01-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-99	lg	blk
James McCourt	18-23	78.3	0-0	5-6	5-5	4-4	4-8	53	1
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>18-26</b>	<b>69.2</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>8-10</b>	<b>2-6</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>0</b>

## FG Sequence

Team Name	Illinois	Opponents
Nebraska	55	(27)
UTSA	(52),(53),(32)	(32),(28),(27)
Maryland	26,(25)	(32),32,(32)
Charlotte	(29)	
Purdue	(51),(35),54,(45)	(23),(30)
Northwestern	(28),(25),(37),(49)	
Iowa	(46)	
Virginia		46,31
Rutgers		(35),46,(25)

Numbers in (parentheses) indicate field goal was made

## Total Offense

Player	g	plays	rush	pass	total	avg/g
Brandon Peters	10	207	0	1170	1170	117.0
Chase Brown	10	170	1005	0	1005	100.5
Artur Sitkowski	5	174	31	704	735	147.0
Josh McCray	11	112	549	0	549	49.9
Reggie Love III	10	44	158	0	158	15.8
Jakari Norwood	9	27	120	0	120	13.3
Mike Epstein	3	25	107	0	107	35.7
Isaiah Williams	12	13	61	0	61	5.1
Casey Washington	12	2	30	0	30	2.5
Chase Hayden	6	5	18	0	18	3.0
Daniel Barker	12	3	18	0	18	1.5
Team	12	0	-14	0	-14	-1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>2083</b>	<b>1874</b>	<b>3957</b>	<b>329.8</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>1805</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>4387</b>	<b>365.6</b>

## Punting

Player	no.	yds	avg	lg	tb	fc	i20	50+	blk
Blake Hayes	68	3068	45.1	80	2	19	33	16	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>3068</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>2564</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>

## Kickoffs

Player	no.	yds	avg	tb	ob	retn	net	ydln
James McCourt	51	3297	64.6	42	0			
Caleb Griffin	2	71	35.5	0	0			
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>3368</b>	<b>63.5</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>3637</b>	<b>62.7</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>39.9</b>	<b>25</b>

## RED ZONE STATISTICS

### Illinois Inside Opponent Red-Zone

Date	Opponent	Score	Times	Times	Total	Failed to score inside RZ									
			In RZ	Scored	Pts	TDs	Rush TDs	Pass TDs	FGs Made	FGA	Down	Int	Fumb	Half	Game
08/28/2021	Nebraska	W 30-22	3	3	21	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
09/04/2021	UTSA	L 30-37	4	3	17	2	0	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
09/11/2021	at Virginia	L 14-42	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
09/17/2021	Maryland	L 17-20	2	1	3	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
09/25/2021	at Purdue	L 9-13	2	1	3	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
10/02/2021	Charlotte	W 24-14	4	2	10	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
10/09/2021	Wisconsin	L 0-24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10/23/2021	at Penn St.	W 20-18	4	4	16	1	1	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
10/30/2021	Rutgers	L 14-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11/06/2021	at Minnesota	W 14-6	2	2	14	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11/20/2021	at Iowa	L 23-33	2	2	14	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11/27/2021	Northwestern	W 47-14	7	6	30	3	3	0	3	3	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Totals 24 of 31 (77.4%)</b>			<b>31</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

### Opponents Inside Illinois Red-Zone

Date	Opponent	Score	Times	Times	Total	Failed to score inside RZ									
			In RZ	Scored	Pts	TDs	Rush TDs	Pass TDs	FGs Made	FGA	Down	Int	Fumb	Half	Game
08/28/2021	Nebraska	W 30-22	3	3	15	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
09/04/2021	UTSA	L 30-37	6	6	30	3	2	1	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
09/11/2021	Virginia	L 14-42	5	4	28	4	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
09/17/2021	Maryland	L 17-20	6	4	20	2	1	1	2	3	0	0	1	0	0
09/25/2021	Purdue	L 9-13	4	3	13	1	0	1	2	2	0	1	0	0	0
10/02/2021	Charlotte	W 24-14	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
10/09/2021	Wisconsin	L 0-24	3	3	17	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
10/23/2021	Penn St.	W 20-18	4	3	9	0	0	0	3	4	0	0	0	0	0
10/30/2021	Rutgers	L 14-20	4	4	20	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
11/06/2021	Minnesota	W 14-6	2	1	6	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
11/20/2021	Iowa	L 23-33	3	3	13	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
11/27/2021	Northwestern	W 47-14	2	2	14	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals 36 of 43 (83.7%)</b>			<b>43</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

# GAME-BY-GAME STATISTICS

Opponent	Score	First Downs				Pen	Rushing		Passing		Total Offense Plays-Yards	Return Yards	Turn-Overs
		Total	Rush	Pass	Pen		Number-Yards	Comp-Att.-Int	Yards				
Nebraska	30-22	18 / 19	9 / 8	8 / 10	1 / 1	48-167 / 39-160	15-19-0 / 16-32-0	159 / 232	67-326 / 71-392	16 / 31	1 / 1		
UTSA	30-37	24 / 26	8 / 10	13 / 14	3 / 2	35-150 / 50-217	22-43-0 / 20-32-0	266 / 280	78-416 / 82-497	30 / 16	1 / 1		
Virginia	14-42	20 / 31	4 / 7	12 / 19	4 / 5	27-116 / 33-133	24-45-1 / 28-40-1	221 / 423	72-337 / 73-556	22 / 13	2 / 2		
Maryland	17-20	19 / 24	9 / 9	7 / 15	3 / 0	45-183 / 27-131	10-26-1 / 32-43-0	185 / 350	71-368 / 70-481	33 / -2	1 / 2		
Purdue	9-13	17 / 17	9 / 3	7 / 14	1 / 0	42-175 / 26-38	14-27-0 / 24-40-2	100 / 277	69-275 / 66-315	7 / 7	0 / 2		
Charlotte	24-14	22 / 17	16 / 7	5 / 7	1 / 3	50-336 / 27-72	10-19-0 / 17-23-1	78 / 191	69-414 / 50-263	2 / 0	1 / 2		
Wisconsin	0-24	9 / 30	1 / 25	3 / 5	5 / 0	13-26 / 61-391	11-34-0 / 10-19-1	67 / 100	47-93 / 80-491	-4 / 5	0 / 2		
Penn St.	20-18	26 / 14	20 / 4	3 / 9	3 / 1	67-357 / 29-62	8-21-1 / 19-34-0	38 / 165	88-395 / 63-227	-2 / 2	3 / 0		
Rutgers	14-20	10 / 23	4 / 17	6 / 6	0 / 0	30-107 / 51-231	14-19-0 / 13-27-0	190 / 158	49-297 / 78-389	0 / 52	0 / 0		
Minnesota	14-6	17 / 20	13 / 7	4 / 10	0 / 3	48-185 / 35-89	7-10-0 / 16-30-2	80 / 200	58-265 / 65-289	18 / 23	0 / 2		
Iowa	23-33	12 / 17	1 / 11	10 / 5	1 / 1	25-64 / 52-172	16-36-2 / 6-18-1	248 / 83	61-312 / 70-255	0 / 208	2 / 1		
Northwestern	47-14	18 / 14	8 / 9	10 / 5	0 / 0	38-217 / 48-109	14-23-1 / 12-25-1	242 / 123	61-459 / 73-232	85 / 28	1 / 2		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>242-263</b>	<b>212 / 252</b>	<b>102 / 117</b>	<b>88 / 119</b>	<b>22 / 16</b>	<b>468-2083 / 478-1805</b>	<b>165-322-6 / 213-363-9</b>	<b>1874 / 2582</b>	<b>790-3957 / 841-4387</b>	<b>207 / 383</b>	<b>12 / 17</b>		

Opponents	3rd Down Conversion	4th Down Conversion	Time of Possession	TOP Margin	Avg Yds/Rush	Avg Yds/Pass	Avg Yds/Play	Punting Number-Avg	Penalties Number-Yards	Sacks
UTSA	8-18 / 9-17	1-2 / 0-0	29:18 / 30:42	-01:24	4.3 / 4.3	6.2 / 8.8	5.3 / 6.1	5-49.0 / 5-44.2	7-61.0 / 3-43.0	1 / 0
Virginia	6-17 / 4-10	0-2 / 1-1	27:52 / 31:19	-03:27	4.3 / 4.0	4.9 / 10.6	4.7 / 7.6	7-42.9 / 3-46.7	8-90.0 / 8-74.0	0 / 3
Maryland	8-17 / 2-10	0-0 / 0-0	30:51 / 29:09	01:42	4.1 / 4.9	7.1 / 8.1	5.2 / 6.9	7-43.1 / 6-47.2	6-44.0 / 8-63.0	3 / 6
Purdue	5-16 / 7-14	0-1 / 0-0	33:45 / 26:15	07:30	4.2 / 1.5	3.7 / 6.9	4.0 / 4.8	6-48.5 / 5-45.8	1-10.0 / 1-15.0	3 / 2
Charlotte	8-15 / 4-9	2-2 / 0-0	34:03 / 25:57	08:06	6.7 / 2.7	4.1 / 8.3	6.0 / 5.3	1-39.0 / 3-39.0	7-85.0 / 5-47.0	3 / 0
Wisconsin	1-12 / 7-13	1-3 / 2-2	17:17 / 42:43	-25:26	2.0 / 6.4	2.0 / 5.3	2.0 / 6.1	7-46.6 / 2-42.0	0-0.0 / 9-101.0	0 / 1
Penn St.	9-18 / 4-17	0-0 / 1-1	36:25 / 23:35	12:50	5.3 / 2.1	1.8 / 4.9	4.5 / 3.6	4-43.0 / 8-46.9	4-50.0 / 7-81.0	4 / 4
Rutgers	3-12 / 3-15	0-1 / 3-3	24:59 / 35:01	-10:02	3.6 / 4.5	10.0 / 5.9	6.1 / 5.0	8-44.4 / 6-47.0	3-35.0 / 3-15.0	0 / 0
Minnesota	5-12 / 3-13	0-0 / 1-3	30:20 / 29:40	00:40	3.9 / 2.5	8.0 / 6.7	4.6 / 4.4	7-43.7 / 4-44.8	8-72.0 / 4-35.0	6 / 1
Iowa	4-16 / 5-16	0-2 / 1-2	25:44 / 33:57	-08:13	2.6 / 3.3	6.9 / 4.6	5.1 / 3.6	7-47.3 / 4-46.5	10-96.0 / 3-22.0	2 / 2
Northwestern	5-13 / 6-19	1-1 / 3-4	26:29 / 33:31	-07:02	5.7 / 2.3	10.5 / 4.9	7.5 / 3.2	3-43.0 / 8-37.0	4-50.0 / 3-25.0	3 / 1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>68-179 / 59-167</b>	<b>5-14 / 13-18</b>	<b>351:58 / 366:54</b>	<b>-14:56</b>	<b>4.5 / 3.8</b>	<b>5.8 / 7.1</b>	<b>5.0 / 5.2</b>	<b>68-45.1 / 59-43.5</b>	<b>61-633.0 / 59-588.0</b>	<b>30 / 23</b>

Note: Game totals are displayed in the format TEAM/OPPONENT for each category

## GAME-BY-GAME STARTERS

### OFFENSIVE STARTERS

GAME	T	G	C	G	T	QB	RB	WR/OL	WR/OL	TE	TE/FB/WR
Nebraska	Low	Jeresaty	Kramer	Pihlstrom	Palczewski	Peters	Epstein	Williams	Navarro	Ford	Barker
UTSA	Low	Jeresaty	Kramer	Pihlstrom	Palczewski	Sitkowski	Norwood	Washington	Navarro	Ford	Barker
Virginia	Low	Badovinac	Kramer	Pearl	Palczewski	Sitkowski	C. Brown	Williams	Campbell	Ford	Barker
Maryland	Low	Badovinac	Jeresaty	Pearl	Palczewski	Peters	C. Brown	Washington	Sandy	Ford	Barker
Purdue	Low	Jeresaty	Kramer	Pearl	Palczewski	Peters	McCray	Bryant	Sandy	Ford	Badovinac
Charlotte	Low	Pihlstrom	Kramer	Pearl	Palczewski	Peters	C. Brown	Bryant	Sandy	Ford	Reiman
Wisconsin	Low	Pihlstrom	Kramer	Pearl	Palczewski	Peters	C. Brown	Williams	Washington	Ford	Reiman
Penn State	Low	Badovinac	Kramer	Palczewski	Pearl	Sitkowski	C. Brown	Barlev	Pihlstrom	Ford	Reiman
Rutger	Low	Badovinac	Kramer	Palczewski	Pearl	Peters	C. Brown	Scott	Hightower	Ford	Marchese
Minnesota	Low	Badovinac	Kramer	Palczewski	Pearl	Peters	C. Brown	Bryant	Sandy	Ford	Barker
Iowa	Low	Badovinac	Kramer	Palczewski	Pearl	Peters	C. Brown	Williams	Washington	Ford	Navarro
Northwestern	Low	Badovinac	Kramer	Palczewski	Pearl	Peters	C. Brown	Williams	Washington	Ford	Navarro
Consecutive	46	5	8	12	10	4	7	2	2	12	2
Career	52	7	48	52	14	25	15	9	11	14	13

### DEFENSIVE STARTERS

GAME	OLB	DT	DT	OLB/DT	OLB/LB	LB	CB	CB	S/LB	S	S
Nebraska	Carney Jr.	Newton	Randolph	Gay	Hansen	Hart Jr.	Adams	Witherspoon	Martin	S. Brown	Joseph
UTSA	Carney Jr.	Newton	Perry	Gay	Hansen	T. Barnes	Adams	Witherspoon	Tolson	S. Brown	D. Smith
Virginia	Carney Jr.	Woods	Perry	Gay	Hansen	T. Barnes	Adams	Witherspoon	Martin	S. Brown	D. Smith
Maryland	Carney Jr.	Newton	Perry	Coleman	Hansen	T. Barnes	Nicholson	Witherspoon	Martin	S. Brown	Joseph
Purdue	Carney Jr.	Newton	Perry	Coleman	McEachern	Tolson	Adams	K. Smith	Martin	S. Brown	Joseph
Charlotte	Carney Jr.	Newton	Randolph	Coleman	T. Barnes	Tolson	Adams	Nicholson	Martin	S. Brown	Joseph
Wisconsin	Carney Jr.	Newton	Perry	Gay	Hansen	T. Barnes	Adams	Witherspoon	Tolson	S. Brown	Joseph
Penn State	Carney Jr.	Newton	Perry	Randolph	Tolson	T. Barnes	Adams	Witherspoon	Martin	S. Brown	Joseph
Rutgers	Carney Jr.	Newton	Perry	Randolph	Tolson	T. Barnes	Adams	Witherspoon	Martin	S. Brown	Joseph
Minnesota	Carney Jr.	Newton	Perry	Randolph	Gay	T. Barnes	Adams	Witherspoon	Martin	S. Brown	Joseph
Iowa	Carney Jr.	Newton	Randolph	Gay	Avery	T. Barnes	Adams	Witherspoon	Tolson	S. Brown	Joseph
Northwestern	Carney Jr.	Newton	Randolph	Gay	Avery	T. Barnes	Adams	Witherspoon	Tolson	S. Brown	Joseph
Consecutive	20	9	5	2	2	8	8	6	2	12	9
Career	28	14	67	20	4	12	36	19	18	38	12

### 2021 ILLINOIS BIG PLAYS

(Rush/Pass/Rec/PR over 20 yds & KOR/Def over 40 yds)

Player	Run	Pass	Rec	Def	ST	Tot
Barker	1	0	3	0	0	4
C. Brown	8	0	2	0	0	10
Epstein	1	0	1	0	0	2
Hart Jr.	0	0	0	1	0	1
Sitkowski	0	7	0	0	0	7
Spann	0	0	3	0	0	3
Williams	0	1	8	0	0	2
Peters	0	19	0	0	0	8
Navarro	0	0	1	0	2	3
McCray	4	0	1	0	0	5
Love III	1	0	0	0	0	1
Washington	0	0	4	0	0	4
Reiman	0	0	1	0	0	1
Campbell	0	0	1	0	0	1
Bryant	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>45</b>

#### Nebraska (3)

- 1Q 45 ..... Epstein rush
- 2Q 41 ..... Hart fumble recovery
- 3Q 45 ..... Spann reception (from Sitkowski)

#### UTSA (4)

- 2Q 31 ..... Spann reception (from Sitkowski)
- 2Q 24 ..... Williams reception (from Sitkowski)
- 4Q 27 ..... Barker reception (from Sitkowski)
- 4Q 25 ..... Williams reception (from Sitkowski)

#### Virginia (3)

- 2Q 33 ..... Spann reception (from Sitkowski)
- 3Q 21 ..... Brown rush
- 4Q 31 ..... Campbell reception (from Sitkowski)

#### Maryland (7)

- 1Q 40 ..... McCray reception (from Peters)
- 2Q 33 ..... Brown, C. reception (from Peters)
- 2Q 28 ..... Williams reception (from Peters)
- 2Q 22 ..... Navarro kick return
- 3Q 38 ..... McCray rush
- 3Q 21 ..... Brown, C. reception (from Peters)
- 4Q 25 ..... Love rush

#### Purdue (1)

- 3Q 38 ..... McCray rush

#### Charlotte (3)

- 3Q 20 ..... Brown, C. rush
- 3Q 31 ..... Brown, C. rush
- 3Q 80 ..... Brown, C. rush

#### Wisconsin (1)

- 2Q 23 ..... Brown, C. rush

#### Penn State (3)

- 2Q 27 ..... Brown, C. rush
- 3Q 22 ..... McCray rush
- 3Q 28 ..... McCray rush

#### Rutgers (4)

- 2Q 52 ..... Williams reception (from Peters)
- 2Q 31 ..... Washington reception (from Peters)
- 2Q 26 ..... Barker reception (from Peters)
- 2Q 21 ..... Barker Reception (from Peters)

#### Minnesota (1)

- 3Q 23 ..... Pass Washington reception (from Peters)

#### Iowa (5)

- 2Q 20 ..... Navarro reception (from Peters)
- 2Q 20 ..... Williams reception (from Peters)
- 3Q 44 ..... Washington reception (from Peters)
- 4Q 45 ..... Bryant reception (from Peters)
- 4Q 24 ..... Reiman reception (from Peters)

#### Northwestern (9)

- 1Q 39 ..... Williams reception (from Peters)
- 1Q 25 ..... Williams reception (from Peters)
- 1Q 21 ..... Barker receptions (from Peters)
- 2Q 56 ..... Washington reception (from Peters)
- 2Q 37 ..... Navarro punt return
- 2Q 31 ..... C. Brown rush
- 2Q 27 ..... Williams reception (from Peters)
- 2Q 21 ..... Williams rush
- 3Q 29 ..... C. Brown rush

### ILLINOIS SCORING DRIVES

#### NEBRASKA

- 1st ..... 4:07 ..... S ..... Joseph, Kerby 0 yd ..... 6-3 3:42
- 2nd ..... 2:51 ..... TD ..... Epstein, Mike 1 yd run (McCourt, James kick) ..... 11-75 6:24
- 2nd ..... 0:37 ..... TD ..... Hart, Calvin 41 yd fumble recovery (McCourt, James kick) ..... 3-2 0:21
- 3rd ..... 6:56 ..... TD ..... Ford, Luke 2 yd pass from Sitkowski (McCourt, James kick) ..... 14-75 8:04
- 3rd ..... 4:01 ..... TD ..... Williams, Isaiah 1 yd pass from Sitkowski (McCourt, James kick) ..... 3-47 1:10

#### UTSA

- 2nd ..... 9:21 ..... TD ..... Spann, Deuce 31 yd pass from Sitkowski (McCourt, James kick) ..... 5-65 2:10
- 2nd ..... 2:46 ..... TD ..... Barker, Daniel 14 yd pass from Sitkowski (McCourt, James kick) ..... 8-75 3:38
- 3rd ..... 9:22 ..... FG ..... McCourt, James 52 yd field goal ..... 4-2 1:26
- 4th ..... 14:15 ..... FG ..... McCourt, James 53 yd field goal ..... 8-30 4:04
- 4th ..... 9:56 ..... TD ..... Barker, Daniel 15 yd pass from Sitkowski (McCourt, James kick) ..... 6-75 2:41
- 4th ..... 1:55 ..... FG ..... McCourt, James 32 yd field goal ..... 14-60 2:56

#### Virginia

- 2nd ..... 11:09 ..... TD ..... Spann, Deuce 33 yd pass from Sitkowski (McCourt, James kick) ..... 8-72, 4:19
- 3rd ..... 12:59 ..... TD ..... Brown, Chase 21 yd rush (McCourt, James kick) ..... 4-75, 2:01

#### Maryland

- 2nd ..... 1:27 ..... FG ..... McCourt, James 25 yd field goal ..... 10-73, 2:16
- 3rd ..... 6:15 ..... TD ..... McCray, Josh 38 yd rush (McCourt, James kick) ..... 8-93, 3:37
- 4th ..... 14:13 ..... TD ..... Washington, Casey 30 yd rush (McCourt, James kick) ..... 3-46, 1:05

#### Purdue

- 2nd ..... 2:24 ..... FG ..... McCourt, James 51 yd field goal ..... 7-29, 3:40
- 3rd ..... 8:18 ..... FG ..... McCourt, James 35 yd field goal ..... 13-58, 6:40
- 4th ..... 14:51 ..... FG ..... McCourt, James 45 yd field goal ..... 6-53, 1:39

#### Charlotte

- 1st ..... 7:28 ..... FG ..... McCourt, James 29 yd field goal ..... 17-64, 7:32
- 2nd ..... 8:18 ..... TD ..... Barker, Daniel 10 yd pass from Peters (McCourt kick) ..... 12-65, 5:40
- 3rd ..... 14:51 ..... TD ..... Brown, Chase 31 yd rush (McCourt kick) ..... 10-94, 4:52
- 3rd ..... 0:00 ..... TD ..... Brown, Chase 80 yd rush (McCourt kick) ..... 1-80, 0:12

#### Wisconsin

none

#### Penn State

- 2nd ..... 2:52 ..... TD ..... C. Brown 1 yd rush (McCourt kick) ..... 15-75, 8:20
- 4th ..... 11:49 ..... FG ..... McCourt 37 yd field goal ..... 16-70, 7:33
- OT1 ..... 00:00 ..... FG ..... McCourt 39 yd field goal ..... 4-4, 0:00
- OT2 ..... 00:00 ..... FG ..... McCourt 22 yd field goal ..... 7-21, 0:00
- OT8 ..... 00:00 ..... 2P ..... Williams pass from Peters
- OT9 ..... 00:00 ..... 2P ..... Washington pass from Peters

#### Rutgers

- 2nd ..... 10:13 ..... TD ..... Williams 52 yd pass from Peters (McCourt kick) ..... 4-66, 1:40
- 2nd ..... 1:28 ..... TD ..... Barker 26 yd pass from Peters (McCourt kick) ..... 4-80, 0:44

#### Minnesota

- 1st ..... 8:15 ..... TD ..... William 2 yd rush ..... 8-49, 3:51
- 2nd ..... 14:55 ..... TD ..... Reiman 15 yd pass from Peters (McCourt kick) ..... 11-86, 4:56

#### Iowa

- 1st ..... 8:37 ..... TD ..... Ford 13 yd pass from Peter (McCourt kick) ..... 12-75, 6:23
- 1st ..... 3:20 ..... FG ..... McCourt 46 yd field goal ..... 4-0, 1:21
- 2nd ..... 3:13 ..... FG ..... McCourt 45 yd field goal ..... 8-48, 3:28
- 3rd ..... 2:46 ..... FG ..... McCourt 53 yd field goal ..... 5-45, 1:55
- 4th ..... 0:31 ..... TD ..... Williams 16 yd pass ..... 5-75, 1:05

#### Northwestern

- 1st ..... 8:37 ..... TD ..... Barker 8 yd rush (McCourt kick) ..... 1-8, 00:05
- 1st ..... 6:08 ..... TD ..... Williams 39 yd pass from Peters (McCourt kick) ..... 2-51, 00:35
- 2nd ..... 12:50 ..... TD ..... Brown 1 yd rush (McCourt kick) ..... 7-76, 02:20
- 2nd ..... 11:22 ..... TD ..... Williams 21 yd rush (McCourt kick) ..... 1-21, 00:08
- 2nd ..... 1:44 ..... FG ..... McCourt 28 yd FG ..... 8-65, 02:51
- 2nd ..... 00:00 ..... FG ..... McCourt 37 yd FG ..... 4-8, 01:25
- 3rd ..... 8:15 ..... FG ..... McCourt 49 yd FG ..... 8-30, 04:39
- 4th ..... 7:59 ..... TD ..... McCray 6 yd rush (McCourt kick) ..... 11-50, 06:1

# SUPERLATIVE STATISTICS

## ILLINOIS TEAM GAME HIGHS

RUSHES	67	at Penn St. (10/23/2021)
YARDS RUSHING	357	at Penn St. (10/23/2021)
YARDS PER RUSH	6.7	Charlotte (10/02/2021)
TD RUSHES	4	Northwestern (11/27/2021)
PASS ATTEMPTS	45	at Virginia (09/11/2021)
PASS COMPLETIONS	24	at Virginia (09/11/2021)
YARDS PASSING	266	UTSA (09/04/2021)
YARDS PER PASS	10.5	Northwestern (11/27/2021)
TD PASSES	3	UTSA (09/04/2021)
TOTAL PLAYS	88	at Penn St. (10/23/2021)
TOTAL OFFENSE	459	Northwestern (11/27/2021)
YARDS PER PLAY	7.5	Northwestern (11/27/2021)
POINTS	47	Northwestern (11/27/2021)
SACKS BY	6	at Minnesota (11/06/2021)
FIRST DOWNS	26	at Penn St. (10/23/2021)
PENALTIES	10	at Iowa (11/20/2021)
PENALTY YARDS	96	at Iowa (11/20/2021)
TURNOVERS	3	at Penn St. (10/23/2021)
PUNTS	8	Rutgers (10/30/2021)
PUNTING AVG	49.0	UTSA (09/04/2021)
LONG PUNT	80	at Purdue (09/25/2021)
PUNTS INSIDE 20	4	at Minnesota (11/06/2021)
	4	at Purdue (09/25/2021)
	4	UTSA (09/04/2021)
LONG PUNT RETURN	37	Northwestern (11/27/2021)

## OPPONENT TEAM GAME HIGHS

RUSHES	61	Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
YARDS RUSHING	391	Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
YARDS PER RUSH	6.4	Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
TD RUSHES	3	UTSA (09/04/2021)
	3	Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
PASS ATTEMPTS	43	Maryland (09/17/2021)
PASS COMPLETIONS	32	Maryland (09/17/2021)
YARDS PASSING	423	at Virginia (09/11/2021)
YARDS PER PASS	10.6	at Virginia (09/11/2021)
TD PASSES	5	at Virginia (09/11/2021)
TOTAL PLAYS	82	UTSA (09/04/2021)
TOTAL OFFENSE	556	at Virginia (09/11/2021)
YARDS PER PLAY	7.6	at Virginia (09/11/2021)
POINTS	42	at Virginia (09/11/2021)
SACKS BY	6	Maryland (09/17/2021)
FIRST DOWNS	31	at Virginia (09/11/2021)
PENALTIES	9	Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
PENALTY YARDS	101	Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
TURNOVERS	2	Northwestern (11/27/2021)
	2	at Minnesota (11/06/2021)
	2	Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
	2	Charlotte (10/02/2021)
	2	at Purdue (09/25/2021)
	2	Maryland (09/17/2021)
	2	at Virginia (09/11/2021)
PUNTS	8	Northwestern (11/27/2021)
	8	at Penn St. (10/23/2021)
PUNTING AVG	47.2	Maryland (09/17/2021)
LONG PUNT	56	Maryland (09/17/2021)
	56	Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
PUNTS INSIDE 20	6	at Penn St. (10/23/2021)
LONG PUNT RETURN	16	UTSA (09/04/2021)

# SUPERLATIVE STATISTICS

## ILLINOIS INDIVIDUAL GAME HIGHS

<b>RUSHES</b>	33	Chase Brown at Penn St. (10/23/2021)
<b>YARDS RUSHING</b>	257	Chase Brown vs Charlotte (10/02/2021)
<b>TD RUSHES</b>	2	Chase Brown vs Charlotte (10/02/2021)
<b>LONG RUSH</b>	80	Chase Brown vs Charlotte (10/02/2021)
<b>PASS ATTEMPTS</b>	45	Artur Sitkowski at Virginia (09/11/2021)
<b>PASS COMPLETIONS</b>	24	Artur Sitkowski at Virginia (09/11/2021)
<b>YARDS PASSING</b>	266	Artur Sitkowski vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
<b>TD PASSES</b>	3	Artur Sitkowski vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
<b>LONG PASS</b>	56	Brandon Peters vs Northwestern (11/27/2021)
<b>RECEPTIONS</b>	8	Isaiah Williams vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
<b>YARDS RECEIVING</b>	113	Isaiah Williams vs Northwestern (11/27/2021)
<b>TD RECEPTIONS</b>	2	Daniel Barker vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
<b>LONG RECEPTION</b>	56	Casey Washington vs Northwestern (11/27/2021)
<b>PUNTS</b>	8	Blake Hayes vs Rutgers (10/30/2021)
<b>PUNTING AVG</b>	49.0	Blake Hayes vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
<b>LONG PUNT</b>	80	Blake Hayes at Purdue (09/25/2021)
<b>PUNTS INSIDE 20</b>	4	Blake Hayes at Minnesota (11/06/2021)
	4	Blake Hayes at Purdue (09/25/2021)
	4	Blake Hayes vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
<b>LONG PUNT RETURN</b>	37	Donny Navarro vs Northwestern (11/27/2021)
<b>LONG KICKOFF RETURN</b>	22	Donny Navarro vs Maryland (09/17/2021)
<b>TACKLES</b>	12	Tarique Barnes vs Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
	12	Sydney Brown vs Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
	12	Jake Hansen vs Maryland (09/17/2021)
<b>SACKS</b>	2	Owen Carney, Jr. vs Charlotte (10/02/2021)
<b>TACKLES FOR LOSS</b>	5.5	Isaiah Gay at Iowa (11/20/2021)

## OPPONENT INDIVIDUAL GAME HIGHS

<b>RUSHES</b>	32	Evan Hull vs Northwestern (11/27/2021)
<b>YARDS RUSHING</b>	145	Chez Mellusi vs Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
<b>TD RUSHES</b>	2	Brenden Brady vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
<b>LONG RUSH</b>	75	Adrian Martinez vs Nebraska (08/28/2021)
<b>PASS ATTEMPTS</b>	43	Taulia Tagovailoa vs Maryland (09/17/2021)
<b>PASS COMPLETIONS</b>	32	Taulia Tagovailoa vs Maryland (09/17/2021)
<b>YARDS PASSING</b>	405	Brennan Armstrong at Virginia (09/11/2021)
<b>TD PASSES</b>	5	Brennan Armstrong at Virginia (09/11/2021)
<b>LONG PASS</b>	43	Aidan O'Connell at Purdue (09/25/2021)
	43	Frank Harris vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
	43	Adrian Martinez vs Nebraska (08/28/2021)
<b>RECEPTIONS</b>	10	Zakhari Franklin vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
<b>YARDS RECEIVING</b>	155	Zakhari Franklin vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
<b>TD RECEPTIONS</b>	2	Dontayvion Wicks at Virginia (09/11/2021)
<b>LONG RECEPTION</b>	43	Abdur-Rahmaan Yaseen at Purdue (09/25/2021)
	43	De'Corian Clark vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
	43	Oliver Martin vs Nebraska (08/28/2021)
<b>FIELD GOALS</b>	4	Caleb Shudak at Iowa (11/20/2021)
<b>LONG FIELD GOALS</b>	51	Caleb Shudak at Iowa (11/20/2021)
<b>PUNTS</b>	8	Jordan Stout at Penn St. (10/23/2021)
<b>PUNTING AVG</b>	56.0	Andy Vujnovich vs Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
<b>LONG PUNT</b>	56	Andy Vujnovich vs Wisconsin (10/09/2021)
	56	Anthony Pecorella vs Maryland (09/17/2021)
<b>PUNTS INSIDE 20</b>	6	Jordan Stout at Penn St. (10/23/2021)
<b>LONG PUNT RETURN</b>	16	Sheldon Jones vs UTSA (09/04/2021)
<b>LONG KICKOFF RETURN</b>	100	Charlie Jones at Iowa (11/20/2021)
<b>TACKLES</b>	15	Chris Bergin vs Northwestern (11/27/2021)
<b>SACKS</b>	2	Sam Okuayinonu vs Maryland (09/17/2021)
	2	Durell Nchami vs Maryland (09/17/2021)
	2	Greg Rose vs Maryland (09/17/2021)
	2	Noah Taylor at Virginia (09/11/2021)
	2	Pheldarius Payne vs Nebraska (08/28/2021)
<b>TACKLES FOR LOSS</b>	2.5	Branson Deen at Purdue (09/25/2021)
	2.5	Garrett Nelson vs Nebraska (08/28/2021)
<b>INTERCEPTIONS</b>	1	Troy Hudetz vs Northwestern (11/27/2021)
	1	Dane Belton at Iowa (11/20/2021)
	1	Jack Campbell at Iowa (11/20/2021)
	1	Curtis Jacobs at Penn St. (10/23/2021)
	1	Nick Cross vs Maryland (09/17/2021)
	1	Anthony Johnson at Virginia (09/11/2021)

# GAME SUMMARIES

## GAME 1

NEBRASKA ..... 22  
ILLINOIS ..... 30

AUG. 28, 2021

MEMORIAL STADIUM // CHAMPAIGN, ILL. // 41,064

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	F
Nebraska	0	9	7	6	22
Illinois	2	14	14	0	30

### SCORING SUMMARY

#### First Quarter

ILL: Joseph safety, 4:07 (6-3,3:42)

#### Second Quarter

NEB: Stepp 2 yd rush (Culp kick missed), 14:25 (7-63, 02:27)  
NEB: Culp 27 yd FG 9:15 (8-60, 03:01)  
ILL: Epstein 1 yd rush (McCourt kick), 2:51 (11-75, 06:24)  
ILL: Hart Jr. 41 yd fumble return (#17 J.McCourt kick), 0:37 (00:21)

#### Third Quarter

ILL Ford 2 yd pass from Sitkowski (McCourt kick), 6:56 (14-75, 08:04)  
ILL Williams 1 yd pass from Sitkowski (McCourt kick), 4:01 (3-47, 01:10)  
NEB Martinez 75 yd rush (Culp kick), 3:48 (1-75, 00:13)

#### Fourth Quarter

NEB Martin 4 yd pass from Martinez (Culp kick missed), 2:41 (19-91, 06:42)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	ILLINOIS	NEBRASKA
First Downs	18	19
Rushes-Yards	48-167	39-160
Passing Yards	159	232
Comp-Att-Int	15-19-0	16-32-0
Total Yards	326	392
Punts-Avg	6-45.3	5-34.4
Kickoff Returns	6-372	5-331
Penalties-Yards	3-40	5-67
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	2-1
Sacks By	5-35	3-17
Third-down Conv.	6-13	5-14
Time of Possession	34:55	25:05

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - Epstein 16-75-1, Love 12-45-0.

NEB - Martinez 17-111-1, Ervin 12-33

**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Sitkowski 12-15-0-2-124.

NEB - Martinez 16-32-0-1-232.

**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Williams 6-41-1, Ford 3-30-1, Washington 2-12-0. NEB - Martin 6-103-1, Toure 3-37-0, Manning 2-26-0

**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - Adams 11, 0.0-0; Brown 9, 0.0-0; Hart 6, 1.5-8. NEB - Henrich 11, 0.5-1; Reimer 8, 0.5-0; Nelson 6, 2.5-9.

### GAME NOTES

- Nebraska's 22 points were the fewest allowed by the Illini defense at Memorial Stadium since defeating Rutgers 38-10 on Nov. 2, 2019.
- Illinois reeled off 28 points in a span of just 13:50, scoring four TDs that turned a 9-2 deficit with less than three minutes left in the first half into a 30-9 lead with just over four minutes remaining in the third quarter.
- Illinois beat Nebraska for the second-straight season, improving to 5-13-1 all-time against the Huskers, including a 3-4-1 record in Champaign.
- This was Illinois' first victory over Nebraska at home since 2015.
- Illinois has now defeated Nebraska in consecutive seasons for the first time since 1923 (W, 24-7 in Champaign) and 1924 (W, 9-6 in Lincoln).
- Illinois posted a conference win in a season opener for the first time since Sept. 1, 1984 (24-16 victory over Northwestern in Champaign).
- Illinois played a season opener at Memorial Stadium against a conference opponent for the first time since Sept. 2, 1995, when No. 25 Illinois hosted No. 13 Michigan.
- Aug. 28 marked the earliest season opener in Illinois' 132-year program history. The previous earliest start date was Aug. 30 (2003, 2008, 2014). This is the ninth time in program history that the season has started in August.
- Illinois played Nebraska in a season opener for the fifth time in program history (1923, 1924, 1925, 1953). The Illini now have a record of 3-1-1 against Nebraska in season openers.
- Illinois captains: DB Tony Adams, OLB Owen Carney Jr., LB Jake Hansen, P Blake Hayes, OL Doug Kramer, OL Vederian Lowe
- Illinois welcomed back fans at Memorial Stadium for the first time since the conclusion of the 2019 season. Today's attendance was 41,064.

## GAME 2

UTSA ..... 37  
ILLINOIS ..... 30

SEPT. 4, 2021

MEMORIAL STADIUM // CHAMPAIGN, ILL. // 33,906

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	F
UTSA	7	13	3	14	37
Illinois	0	14	3	13	30

### SCORING SUMMARY

#### First Quarter

UTSA: Frank 9 yd rush (Duplessis kick), 1:32 (13-94 4:40)

#### Second Quarter

UTSA: Brady 7 yd rush (Duplessis kick), 11:31 (9-61, 03:43)  
ILL: Spann 31 yd reception from Sitkowski (McCourt kick), 9:21 (5-65 2:10)  
UTSA: Duplessis 32 yd field goal, 6:24 (9-60, 2:57)  
ILL: Barker 14 yd pass from Sitkowski (McCourt kick), 2:46 (8-75 3:38)  
UTSA: Duplessis, Hunte 28 yd field goal, 0:47 (5-15 1:01)

#### Third Quarter

ILL: McCourt 53 yd field goal, 9:22 (4-2, 1:26)  
UTSA: Duplessis 27 yd field goal, 3:19 (10-75, 3:39)

#### Fourth Quarter

ILL: McCourt 52 yd field goal, 14:15 (8-30,4:04)  
UTSA: Franklin 19 yd pass from Harris (Duplessis kick), 12:37 (5-75,1:38)  
ILL: Barker 15 yd pass from Sitkowski (McCourt kick), 9:56 (6-75,2:41)  
UTSA: Brady 33 yd run (Duplessis kick), 4:57 (10-75,4:59)  
ILL: McCourt 32 ys field goal, 1:55 (14-60,2:56)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	ILLINOIS	UTSA
First Downs	24	26
Rushes-Yards	35-146	50-217
Passing Yards	266	280
Comp-Att-Int	22-43-0	20-32-0
Total Yards	412	497
Punts-Avg	5-49.0	5-44.2
Kickoff Returns	7-455	8-498
Penalties-Yards	7-61	3-43
Fumbles-Lost	3-1	1-1
Sacks By	1-0	0-0
Third-down Conv.	8-18	9-17
Time of Possession	29:18	30:42

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - Love III 11-39-0, Sitkowski 6-38-0

UTSA - McCormick 31-127-0, Brady 11-67-2

**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Sitkowski 22-42-0-3-266

UTSA - Harris 20-32-0-1-280

**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Williams 8-101-0, Barker 5-74-2, Spann 1-31-1.

UTSA - Franklin 10-155-1, Cephus 6-73-0

**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - Adams 11, 0.0-0; Brown 9, 0.0-0; Hart 6, 1.5-8. UTSA - Woolen 6, 1.0-1; Harmanston 7, 0.0-0 Taylor 5, 0.0-0

### GAME NOTES

- Illinois scored 30 points in the loss to UTSA, the team's second consecutive 30-point offensive effort to start the season. Illinois last scored 30 points in back-to-back games on Nov. 2, 2019 vs. Rutgers (W, 38-10) and Nov. 9, 2019 at Michigan State (W, 37-34).
- The Illinois offensive line did not surrender a sack in Saturday's game, last accomplishing the feat Dec. 12, 2020 at Northwestern.
- Sophomore QB Artur Sitkowski through for a career-best three touchdowns in Saturday's game. Sitkowski also tallied 266 yards, completing 22 of 42 attempts, the second-most attempts of his collegiate career.
- Redshirt freshman WR Isaiah Williams led the Illini with eight catches for 101 yards. Williams is the first Illinois player with 100+ receiving yards in a game since Josh Imatorbhebe had 178 yards on Nov. 9, 2019 at Michigan State.
- Junior TE Daniel Barker recorded five catches for 74 yards with two touchdown receptions. Barker's two touchdowns marked a career-high. He is only the third Illinois TE to have two receiving touchdowns in a single game in the last 25 years
- Senior K James McCourt hit two field goals from 50+ yards on Saturday, giving him six for his Illini career and moving him past former teammate Chase McLaughlin (2014-18) for the Illini career record.
- McCourt became the first Illini to hit two FGs from 50+ yards in a single game. McCourt also tied his career-high with three total FGs (at Rutgers, Nov. 14, 2020) and set a new career-high with 12 points scored.

## GAME 3

ILLINOIS ..... 14  
VIRGINIA ..... 42

SEPT. 11, 2021

SCOTT STADIUM // CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA. // 36,036

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	F
Illinois	0	7	7	0	14
Virginia	14	7	14	7	42

### SCORING SUMMARY

#### First Quarter

UVA: Woods 32 yd pass from Armstrong (Duenkel kick), 13:44 (4-75, 01:16)

UVA: Wicks 28 yd pass from Armstrong (Duenkel kick), 10:04 (4-80, 01:37)

#### Second Quarter

ILL: Spann 33 yd pass from Sitkowski (McCourt kick), 11:09 (8-72, 04:19)

UVA: Wicks 6 yd pass from Armstrong (Duenkel kick), 01:17 (7-62, 02:41)

#### Third Quarter

ILL: Brown 21 yd run (McCourt kick), 12:59 (4-75, 02:01)

UVA: Kemp 2 yd pass from Armstrong (Duenkel kick), 09:04 (9-75 yards, 03:55)

UVA: Thompson, Keytaon 8 yd run (Duenkel, Justin kick), 04:06 (9-74, 03:50)

#### Fourth Quarter

UVA: Taulapapa 3 yd pass from Armstrong (Duenkel kick), 06:02 (5-46, 02:44)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	ILLINOIS	VIRGINIA
First Downs	20	31
Rushes-Yards	27-116	33-133
Passing Yards	221	423
Comp-Att-Int	24-45-1	28-40-1
Total Yards	337	556
Punts-Avg	7-42.9	3-46.7
Kickoff Returns	0	0
Penalties-Yards	8-90	8-74
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	2-1
Sacks By	0-0	3
Third-down Conv.	6-17	4-10
Time of Possession	27:52	31:19

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - Brown 7-41-1, Norwood 4-35-0

UVA - Taulapapa 10-35-0, Armstrong 5-31-0

**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Sitkowski 24-45-1-2-221

UVA - Armstrong 27-36-1-5-405

**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Williams 4-41-0, Campbell 2-42-0, Spann 1-33-1.

UVA - Woods 5-122-1, Wicks 3-69-2

**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - Martin 7, 0.5-3; Witherspoon 7, 1.0-1;

Hansen 6, 0.5-3. UVA - Taylor 7, 2.0-14; Jackson 7, 0.0-0; Clary 7, 0.5-1

### GAME NOTES

- The Fighting Illini fall to 1-2, and 0-1 on the road, to open the 2021 season.
- Saturday's loss moves the Illini to 2-1 all-time against Virginia. The Illini had previously beaten the Cavaliers in two bowl matchups at the 1999 MicronPC.com Bowl and the 1990 Citrus Bowl.
- Today's game at Virginia kicked off at 11:01 a.m. ET/10:01 a.m. CT, marking the earliest kickoff time in program history.
- The Illinois defense gave up 405 yards passing to Virginia QB Brennan Armstrong (27-36, 5 TDs). It marks the first 400-yard passer against the Illini defense in almost 19 years, dating back to Sept. 21, 2002 when San Jose State's Scott Rislov recorded 408 passing yards.
- Illinois captains: DB Tony Adams, OLB Owen Carney Jr., LB Jake Hansen, P Blake Hayes, OL Doug Kramer, OL Vederian Lowe.
- Senior OL duo of Vederian Lowe and Alex Palczewski each made their 43rd career starts (37th consecutive for Lowe) on Saturday. They are now tied for 17th on the Illini career starts list, five starts away from tying the Illinois record of 48.
- Senior LB Jake Hansen forced two fumbles on Saturday, giving him 12 for his Illini career. He moves past Whitney Mercilus (11) into second place in program history and is one behind career leader Simeon Rice (13)
- Sophomore RB Chase Brown recorded a career-high with 4 receptions. His previous best was 2 catches (vs. Iowa on 12/5/20, and at Penn State on 12/19/20).
- Senior DB Kerby Joseph recorded his first-career interception with 9:30 to play in the fourth quarter. Joseph's pick ended the UVA drive at the 1-yard line.
- Redshirt freshman WR Isaiah Williams, also a converted quarterback, led the Illini in receiving for the second-consecutive game, finishing with five catches for 41 yards.
- Freshman WR Pat Bryant recorded his first-career reception in the fourth quarter of Saturday's game.

# GAME SUMMARIES

## GAME 4

MARYLAND ..... 20  
ILLINOIS ..... 17

SEPT. 17, 2021

MEMORIAL STADIUM // CHAMPAIGN, ILL. // 37,168

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	F
Maryland	0	3	7	10	20
Illinois	0	3	7	7	17

### SCORING SUMMARY

#### Second Quarter

UMD: Petrino 32 yd FG, 10:43 (11-66, 05:07)  
ILL: McCourt 25 yd FG, 01:27 (10-73, 02:16)

#### Third Quarter

UMD: Fleet-Davis 2 yd rush (Petrino kick), 13:11 (5-75, 01:49)  
ILL: McCray 38 yd rush (McCourt kick), 06:15 (8-93, 03:37)

#### Fourth Quarter

ILL: Washington 30 yd rush (McCourt kick), 14:13 (3-46, 01:05)  
UMD: Fleet-Davis 10 yd pass from Tagovailoa (Petrino kick), 02:13 (8-86, 02:37)  
UMD: Petrino 32 yd FG, 00:00 (3-32, 00:47)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	Maryland	Illinois
First Downs	24	19
Rushes-Yards	27-131	45-150
Passing Yards	350	185
Comp-Att-Int	32-43-0	10-26-1
Total Yards	481	335
Punts-Avg	6-47.2	7-43.1
Kickoff Returns	4-254	4-260
Penalties-Yards	8-63	6-44
Fumbles-Lost	3-2	1-0
Sacks By	6-53	3-18
Third-down Conv.	2-10	8-17
Time of Possession	29:09	30:51

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - McCray 8-60-1, Brown 14-57-0.

UMD - Fleet-Davis 11-62-1, Tagovailoa 6-43-0

**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Peters 10-26-1-0-185

UMD - Tagovailoa 32-43-0-1-350

**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Brown 2-54-0, Williams 2-47-0

UMD - Deemus 8-77-0, Jarrett 4-70-0, Jones 5-70-0

**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - Adams 11, 0.0-0; Brown 9, 0.0-0; Hart 6, 1.5-8. UMD - Cross 7, 0.0-0 Mosley 6, 0.0-0 Okuyayinonu 6, 2.0-21

### GAME NOTES

- Friday's loss moves the Illini to 0-2 in the series vs. Maryland.
- Tonight's game marked the fourth Friday night game in the last five years for the Illini. (also 2017 at #22 USF, 2018 vs. #10 Penn State, 2020 at Wisconsin).
- The Illini defense held Maryland out of the end zone in the first half Friday night. The Terrapins entered the game averaging 46.0 points per game overall, and had averaged 29.0 points per game in the first half of each of their first two games.
- The Terrapins entered Week 3 13th in the country in scoring, but were held to a season-low 20 points by the Illini defense.
- The Illinois defense forced Maryland's first turnover of the season in the third quarter, halting a Terrapins drive that had covered 66 yards in seven plays by forcing a fumble at the Illini 7-yard line.
- The illini offense out-rushed the Maryland ground attack, 150-131 on Friday night with four different Illinois players recording at least 30 yards on the ground.
- Senior LB Jake Hansen recorded his first sack on Friday night. Hansen finished with a game-high 12 total tackles (11 solo).
- Junior DB Jartavius Martin caused the first turnover of the season for the Maryland offense when he forced Terps running back Tayon Fleet-Davis to fumble at the Illini 7-yard line. It was the first forced fumble of the year for Martin (second career). Martin also finished with double-digit tackles, tallying 10 total tackles (7 solo).
- Junior DB Kerby Joseph recovered the Maryland fumble by Tayon Fleet-Davis, the first fumble recovery of his collegiate career.
- Maryland lost their second fumble of the third quarter on their next offensive possession when redshirt freshman LB Seth Coleman ripped the ball away from Maryland RB Peny Boone. It mark the first forced fumble and fumble recovery of Coleman's Illini career.
- True freshman RB Josh McCray's 38-yard touchdown run in the third quarter tied the game at 10. It was both McCray's first-career TD and the longest carry of his career. He is the first true freshman RB to score a touchdown for Illinois since Ra'Von Bonner (at Minnesota, 10/21/2017). McCray finished the game as the Illini's leading rusher with a career-best 60 yards on the ground.

## GAME 5

ILLINOIS ..... 9  
PURDUE ..... 13

SEPT. 25, 2021

ROSS-ADE STADIUM // WEST LAFAYETTE, IND. // 52,840

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	F
Illinois	0	3	3	3	9
Purdue	6	0	0	7	13

### SCORING SUMMARY

#### First Quarter

PUR: Fineran 23 yd field goal, 08:31 (15-69 yards, 06:29)  
PUR: Fineran 30 yd field goal, 03:34 (6-34, 02:57)

#### Second Quarter

ILL: McCourt 51 yd field goal, 02:24 (7-29, 3:40)

#### Third Quarter

ILL: McCourt 35 yd field goal, 08:18 (13-58, 6:42)

#### Fourth Quarter

ILL: McCourt 45 yd field goal, 14:51 (6-53,3:42)  
PUR: Sheffield 14 yd pass from O'Connell (Fineran kick), 05:44 (10-94, 3:42)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	ILLINOIS	PURDUE
First Downs	17	17
Rushes-Yards	42-175	26-38
Passing Yards	100	277
Comp-Att-Int	14-27-0	24-40-2
Total Yards	275	315
Punts-Avg	6-48.5	5-45.8
Kickoff Returns	0-0	0-0
Penalties-Yards	1-10	1-15
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	0-0
Sacks By	1-0	0-0
Third-down Conv.	3-20	2-12
Time of Possession	33:45	26:15

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - McCray 24-156-0

PUR - Downing 10-40-0, Cross 7-12

**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Peters 14-26-0-0-100

UTSA - O'Connell 12-19-2-1-182, Plummer 12-21-0-0-95

**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Washington 3-31-0, Bryant 3-25-0, Williams 4-21-0. PUR - Wright 7-88-0 Yaseen 3-77 Sheffield 4-44

**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - Brown 7, 0.0-0 Joseph 6, 0.0-0 Barnes T. 5, 1.0-10 PUR - Grant 8, 0.0-0 Alexander 6, 0.0-0

### GAME NOTES

- The 38 rushing yards allowed marked a season-low for the Illini defense, eclipsing the 131 yards given up on the ground vs. Maryland (9/17/21). It is the first time that the Illini have held an opponent to 50 or fewer rushing yards since allowing 10 vs.UConn (9/7/2019).
- The Illini defense also held the Boilermakers to just 315 yards of total offense, also a season-low for the Orange and Blue, besting the mark of 392 yards surrendered in the season-opening victory over Nebraska (8/28/21).
- The Illinois defense, which entered the game ranked third in the Big Ten and 22nd nationally with six takeaways, recorded two more vs. the Boilermakers with a pair of second-half interceptions.
- Senior OL duo of Vederian Lowe and Alex Palczewski each made their 45th career starts (39th consecutive for Lowe) on Saturday. They are now tied for ninth on the Illini career starts list, two starts away from the top five and three away from tying the Illinois record of 48.
- The Illini defense played without senior LB Jake Hansen, who entered the game as the team's leading tackler at 7.5 tackles per game.
- Josh McCray became the first true freshman to start at RB for the Illini since Ra'Von Bonner at Minnesota (10/21/2017). Bonner and Mike Epstein each started three games as freshmen during the 2017 season.
- McCray ran for a career-most 156 yards on 24 carries vs. the Boilermakers. It marks the fifth-most rushing yards by a true freshman in program history, and the most by a true freshman RB since Ke'Shawn Vaughn recorded 180 yards against Purdue (11/7/2015).
- The combination of Bryant and RB Josh McCray marks the first time that the Illini offense has started two true freshman on since QB M.J. Rivers and WR Carlos Sandy started against Penn State (9/21/2018).
- Senior P Blake Hayes boomed a career-long 80-yard punt early in the second quarter on Saturday. It is tied for the seventh longest punt in program history (Brett Larson, 80 yards vs. Arizona, 9/16/1995).

## GAME 6

CHARLOTTE ..... 14  
ILLINOIS ..... 24

OCT. 2, 2021

MEMORIAL STADIUM // CHAMPAIGN, ILL // 30,559

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	F
Charlotte	7	7	0	0	14
Illinois	3	7	14	0	24

### SCORING SUMMARY

#### First Quarter

ILL: McCourt 29 yd field goal, 7:28 (17-64, 07:32)  
CLT: Tucker 22 yd pass from Reynolds (Cruz kick), 2:52 (1-75, 5:57)

#### Second Quarter

ILL: Barker 10 yd pass from Peters (McCourt kick), 2:52 (1-65, 5:40)  
CLT: Spencer 27 yd pass from Reynolds (Cruz kick), 0:46 (6-66, 2:06)

#### Third Quarter

ILL: Brown, C. 31 yd run (McCourtkick), 6:52 (10-94, 4:52)  
ILL: Brown, C. 80 yd run (McCourt kick), 0:00 (1-80, 0:12)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	CHARLOTTE	ILLINOIS
First Downs	17	22
Rushes-Yards	27-72	50-336
Passing Yards	191	78
Comp-Att-Int	17-23-1	10-19-0
Total Yards	263	414
Punts-Avg	3-39	1-39
Kickoff Returns	0	0
Penalties-Yards	5-47	7-85
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	1-1
Sacks By	0	3
Third-down Conv.	4-9	8-15
Time of Possession	25:57	34:03

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - Brown, C. 26-257-2, McCray 16-64-0

CLT - Camp 7-29-0, Reynolds 12-60-0

**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Peters 10-19-0-1-78

CLT Reynolds 17-23-1-2-191

**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Williams 3-14-0, Washington 2-18-0

CLT - DuBoise 4-70-0, Tucker 5-55-1

**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - Brown, S. 6, 0.0-0 Adams 5, 0.5-2 Barnes 5, 0.5-2. CLT - Alexander 10,2,0-2 Rogers 7, 0.0-0 Whisenhunt 6,0.0-0

### GAME NOTES

- The Fighting Illini improve to 2-4 with the 24-14 victory over Charlotte.
- Illinois tallied a season-high 414 yards of total offense on Saturday, eclipsing the 412 yards recorded in Game 2 vs. UTSA.
- The Illini rushed for 336 yards as a team, also a season-best mark. It is the most for the program since rushing for 341 yards last season at Rutgers (11/14/20).
- After surrendering 14 first-half points, the Illinois defense held Charlotte scoreless in the second half on Sunday. It marks the first time the Fighting Illini defense held an opponent scoreless in the second half of a game since a 38-10 win at Rutgers on Nov. 2, 2019.
- The Illini offense took a 17-14 lead with 6:52 left in the third quarter on a 10-play, 94-yard drive capped by a 31-yard TD run by sophomore RB Chase Brown. The 94-yard drive marked the longest scoring drive of the season for the Illini.
- On the next offensive possession, the Illini scored on their first play from scrimmage, an 80-yard TD run also by Brown.
- Sophomore running back Chase Brown rushed for a career-high 257 yards and tied his career-high with two rushing touchdowns, giving him three TDs on the season and five for his career. Brown's 257 yards are the fourth-most in a single game in program history and the third-most by a running back in college football this season.
- Brown's second TD of the game, an 80-yard score, came on the first play of the ensuing Illini possession and gave Illinois a 24-14 lead as time expired in the third quarter. The 80-yard scoring run tied for the 10th-longest in program history.
- Junior Daniel Barker hauled in his 10th career touchdown in the second quarter, breaking the Illini record for career-TD receptions by a tight end. He moved past Ken Dilger who caught nine touchdowns for the Illini from 1991-94.
- Senior OLB Owen Carney Jr. recorded two fourth-quarter sacks and now has 14 for his career which ranks 13th in program history, just one away from cracking the top 10.
- Freshman Pat Bryant became the 15th Illini in program history to start multiple games at wide receiver as a true freshman.

# GAME SUMMARIES

## GAME 7

WISCONSIN ..... 24  
 ILLINOIS ..... 0  
 OCT. 9, 2021  
 MEMORIAL STADIUM // CHAMPAIGN, ILL. // 40,168

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	F
Wisconsin	3	7	14	0	24
Illinois	0	0	0	0	0

### SCORING SUMMARY

#### First Quarter

WIS: Larsh 25 yd field goal, 4:14 (18-67,9:44)

#### Second Quarter

WIS: Chenal 1 yd run (Larsh kick), 5:27 (14-79, 6:50)

#### Third Quarter

WIS: Mellusi 15 yd run (Larsh kick), 8:38 (13-5, 6:22)

WIS: Allen 23 yd run (Larsh kick), 1:00 (5-86, 2:45)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	WISCONSIN	ILLINOIS
First Downs	30	9
Rushes-Yards	61-391	13-26
Passing Yards	100	67
Comp-Att-Int	10-19-1	11-34-0
Total Yards	491	93
Punts-Avg	2-42	7-46.6
Kickoff Returns	5	1
Penalties-Yards	9-101	0-0
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	0-0
Sacks By	1-9	0-0
Third-down Conv.	7 of 13	1 of 12
Time of Possession	42:43	17:17

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - Brown 8-25-0, McCray 3-1-0

WIS - Mellusi 21-145-1, Allen 18-131-1

**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Sitkowski 8-28-0-0-55

WIS - Mertz 10-19-1-0-100

**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Williams 4-23-0, Navarro 1-16-0

WIS - Pryor 2-47-0, Dike 3-22-0, Chenal J. 2-15-0

**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - Brown, S. 12, 0.0-0; Barnes 12, 0.0-0; Hart 6, 1.5-8. WIS - Burks 6, 1.5-5. Chenal L. S, 0.5-5

### GAME NOTES

- The Fighting Illini move to 2-5 (1-3 B1G) following Saturday's loss.
- The series between the Illini and Badgers now stands at 38-44-7 overall, and 22-19-3 in Champaign.
- With a temperature of 84 degrees at kickoff, today's game was the warmest Homecoming game since 84 degrees against Purdue in 1994.
- Senior OL duo of Vederian Lowe and Alex Palczewski each made their 47th career starts. They are now tied for fourth on the Illini career starts list among all positions, and tied for third among offensive linemen. They are one start from tying the Illinois record of 48.
- Lowe's start also marked his 41st consecutive. He entered the week ranked tied for 10th nationally.
- Junior DB Kerby Joseph recorded two takeaways in Saturday's game, with his third interception of the season in the second quarter, and his third fumble recovery of the year in the third quarter.
- Joseph's three interceptions are the most in a single season by an Illini player since 2019 when Sydney Brown and Dele Harding each recorded three picks.
- Joseph has now tallied six takeaways for the Illini defense in the last five games with interceptions at Virginia (9/11/21), at Purdue (9/25/21), and fumble recoveries vs. Maryland (9/17/21), and vs. Charlotte (10/2/21), before recording one of each today.
- RB Chase Brown broke a 23-yard run in the second quarter for the Illini. It marked the second-longest run play of the season against the Badgers' defense. He finished as the Illini's leading rusher with 35 yards on eight carries.
- Sophomore LB Tarique Barnes recorded a career-most 12 tackles on Saturday, eclipsing his previous best of 11 set last season at Wisconsin (10/23/20) and tied earlier this year vs. UTSA (9/4/21).

## GAME 8

ILLINOIS ..... 20  
 #7 PENN STATE ..... 18  
 OCT. 23, 2021  
 BEAVER STADIUM // UNIVERSITY PARK, PENN. // 105,001

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	9 OT	F
Illinois	0	7	0	3	10	20
Penn State	7	3	0	0	8	18

### SCORING SUMMARY

#### First Quarter

PSU: Lambert-Smith 42 yd pass from Clifford, 0:09 (Stout kick) (4-93, 1:55)

#### Second Quarter

PSU: Stout 35 yd field goal, 11:12 (6-23, 01:41)

ILL: C. Brown 1 yd rush, 2:52 (McCourt kick) (6-23, 1:41)

#### Fourth Quarter

ILL: McCourt 37 yd field goal, 11:49 (16-70, 7:33)

### Overtimes

PSU: Stout 31 yd field goal (8-12,0:00)

ILL: McCourt 39 yd field goal (4-4 yards, 0:00)

ILL: McCourt 22 yd field goal (7-21, 0:00)

PSU: Stout 40 yd field goal (4-3, 0:00)

ILL: Williams successful two-point conversion

PSU: Cain successful two-point conversion

ILL: Washington successful two-point conversion (pass from Peters)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	ILLINOIS	#7 PENN STATE
First Downs	26	14
Rushes-Yards	67-357	29-62
Passing Yards	38	165
Comp-Att-Int	8-21-1	19-34-0
Total Yards	395	227
Punts-Avg	4-43	8-46.9
Kickoff Returns	3	3
Penalties-Yards	4-50	7-81
Fumbles-Lost	3-2	1-0
Sacks By	4-26	4-31
Third-down Conv.	9 of 18	4 of 17
Time of Possession	36:25	23:35

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - Brown 33-223-1, McCray 24-142-0

PSU - Cain 11-43-0, Lee 7-27-0

**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Sitkowski 8-19-1-0-38

PSU - Clifford 19-34-1-0-165

**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Navarro 2-12-0, Barker 2-11-0

PSU - Dotson 6-58-0, Lambert-Smith 3-49-1

**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - T. Barnes 7, 1.0-3; Witherspoon 6, 2.0;14. PSU - Brown 13, 0.0-0 Brooks 11, 0.5-1

### GAME NOTES

- The nine-overtime game was the longest in college football history.
- Illinois running back duo of Chase Brown (33 carries, 223 yards) and Josh McCray (24 carries, 142 yards) are the first teammates to rush for 100+ yards against Penn State since Rodney Smith (104) & Shannon Brooks (100) for Minnesota in 2016. They are also the first Illini teammates to rush for 100 yards in the same game since Mike Epstein (113) and Brown (110) at Nebraska in 2020.
- Brown and McCray are just the third and fourth rushers to record more than 100 yards against Penn State this season joining Wisconsin's Chez Mellusi (31 carries, 121 yards) and Auburn's Tank Bigsby (23 carries, 102 yards).
- Brown's 223 rushing yards were the most ever by an opponent at Beaver Stadium and the fourth-most ever against Penn State. Brown is the first rusher to eclipse the 200-yard mark against the Penn State defense since Benjarvus Green-Ellis recorded 203 yards in 2003 for Indiana.
- Brown's 223-yard game marks his second game of the season with 200+ yards. He joins Howard Griffith (1990) and Rashard Mendenhall (2007) as the only players in program history with multiple 200-yard rushing games in a single season.
- OLB Owen Carney recorded the 15th sack of his career on Penn State's opening offensive drive. Carney is now tied for ninth in Illini history. The sack also gives him 5.5 sacks on the season (all withing the last five games) a single-season career high surpassing his 5.0 sacks from last season.
- DBs Devon Witherspoon and Kerby Joseph each recorded the first sacks of their Illini careers on Saturday. Witherspoon's sack came on third down and ended the Penn State drive that began at the 11:49 mark of the fourth quarter. Joseph's came on third down in the first overtime period and resulted in PSU's settling for a field goal on their opening possession of the extra period.

## GAME 9

RUTGERS ..... 20  
 ILLINOIS ..... 14  
 OCT. 30, 2021  
 MEMORIAL STADIUM // CHAMPAIGN, ILL. // 36,942

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	F
Rutgers	7	3	0	10	20
Illinois	0	14	0	0	14

### SCORING SUMMARY

#### First Quarter

RUT: Monangai 7 yd run, 4:20 (Ambrosiokick) (10-61, 4:58)

#### Second Quarter

ILL: Williams 52 yd pass from Peters, 10:13 (McCourt kick) (4-66, 1:40)

RUT: Ambrosio 35 yd field goal, 5:42 (10-62, 4:24)

ILL: Barker 26 yd pass from Peters, 1:28 (McCourt kick) 4-80,0:44

#### Fourth Quarter

RUT: Vedral 15 yd run, 14:16 (Ambrosio kick) (13-88, 5:04)

RUT: Ambrosio 25 yd field goal, 3:53 (7-36, 3:36)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	RUTGERS	ILLINOIS
First Downs	23	10
Rushes-Yards	51-230	30-107
Passing Yards	158	190
Comp-Att-Int	13-27-0	14-19-0
Total Yards	388	297
Punts-Avg	6-47	8-44.4
Kickoff Returns	2	0
Penalties-Yards	3-15	3-35
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	0-0
Sacks By	0-0	0-0
Third-down Conv.	3 of 15	3 of 12
Time of Possession	35:01	24:59

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - Brown 18-67-0, Peters 5-25-0

RUT - Pacheco 21-91-0 Monangai 15-77-1

**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Peters 14-19-0-2-190

RUT - Vedral 10-21-0-1-138

**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Williams 3-67-1, Barker 2-47-1

RUT - Melton 5-58-0, Lambert-Smith 3-49-1

**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - T. Barnes 11, 0.5-1; Brown 10, 0.0-0

RUT - Fatukasi 8, 1.5-2 Fogg5,0.0-Own 1

### GAME NOTES

- OL duo of Vederian Lowe and Alex Palczewski each made their 49th career starts on Saturday, breaking the Illini record previously held by QB Nathan Scheelhaase (2010-13), C Ryan McDonald (2005-08), and OL Tim Simpson (1988-91). Lowe has now started in 43 consecutive games.
- Illini C Doug Kramer also continues to climb the career starts list, making his 45th career start, now tied for 11th on the all-time list.
- QB Brandon Peters threw a season-most two touchdown passes. It is the eighth game of his career with multiple TD passes, including seven such games at Illinois at one as a redshirt freshman at Michigan in 2017.
- Peters' 52-yard touchdown pass to WR Isaiah Williams at the 10:13 mark of the second quarter was the longest pass completion of the season for the Fighting Illini. Williams finished with three receptions for 67 yards to lead the Illini in both categories.
- WR Casey Washington hauled in a career-long reception of 31 yards on the Illini's final drive of the first half. Washington finished with 34 yards on two receptions.
- TE Daniel Barker recorded 47 receiving yards and moved up to No. 6 on the Illinois career list for tight ends with 772 yards, eight yards behind No. 5 Jeff Finke (780 yards, 1988-90).
- LB Tarique Barnes led the Illini defense with 11 tackles, his third game of the season with double-digit tackles (12 vs. Wisconsin and 11 vs. UTSA).
- DB Sydney Brown recorded 10 tackles for the Illini defense, his second game of the year with double-digit tackles. His eight solo stops also matched a career-best total.
- DL Keith Randolph's nine tackles marked a career-most, surpassing his previous high of five set earlier this season vs. Wisconsin.

# GAME SUMMARIES

## GAME 10

ILLINOIS ..... 14  
 #-/20 MINNESOTA ..... 6  
 NOV. 3, 2021  
 HUNTINGTON BANK // MINNEAPOLIS, MINN. // 46,382

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	F
Illinois	7	7	0	0	14
Minnesota	0	0	0	6	6

### SCORING SUMMARY

**First Quarter**  
 ILL: Williams 2 yd run (McCourt kick), 8:15 (8-49, 03:51)

**Second Quarter**  
 ILL: Chenal 1 yd run (McCourt kick), 14:55 (11-86, 05:49)

**Fourth Quarter**  
 MINN: Morgan 1 yd rush (Trickett kick missed), 4:49 (13-86, 04:56)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	ILLINOIS	MINNESOTA
First Downs	17	20
Rushes-Yards	48-185	35-89
Passing Yards	80	200
Comp-Att-Int	7-10-0	16-30-2
Total Yards	265	289
Punts-Avg	7-43.7	4-44.8
Kickoff Returns	0	0
Penalties-Yards	7-72	4-35
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	1-0
Sacks By	6-31	1-7
Third-down Conv.	5 of 12	3 of 13
Time of Possession	30:20	29:40

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - Brown 32-147-0, Peters 7-28-0  
 MINN- Thomas 16-60-0, Irving 5-28-0  
**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Peters 7-9-0-1-80  
 MINN - Morgan 15-28-2-0-180  
**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Washington 1-23-0, Marchese 1-15-0, Riemann 1-15-1 MINN - Spann-Ford 4-49-0, Wright 2-46-0,  
**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - Brown, S. 9, 1.5-6; Barnes 8, 0.5-1; Gay 6, 1.5-14. MINN - Sorli-Marin 12, 0.0-0 Gibbins 9, 0.0-0

### GAME NOTES

- The Fighting Illini improve to 4-6 (3-4 B1G) following Saturday's win at Minnesota (6-3, 4-2 B1G).
- Illinois head coach Bret Bielema is now 8-0 in his career vs. Minnesota.
- Illinois has now won multiple Big Ten road games in three straight seasons for the first time since 1992-94. Prior to 2019, Illinois had not won multiple Big Ten road games in a single season since 2010.
- Today's victory marks Illinois' first road win in the series vs. Minnesota since 2009.
- With today's win over Minnesota (#20 in the CFP), the Illini capture the first victory in program history over an opponent ranked in the College Football Playoff top 25.
- The Fighting Illini defense held Minnesota to a season-low six points, the unit's seventh straight game allowing 24 or fewer points. It marks the longest such streak for the Illini program since an eight-game stretch that spanned the final five games of the 2002 season and the first three games of the 2003 campaign.
- The Illini defense recorded a season-most six sacks on Saturday, and tied a season-high total with two interceptions. The Illini have recorded three or more sacks in five of seven B1G games this season.
- OL duo of Vederian Lowe and Alex Palczewski each made their 50th career starts on Saturday, extending their Illini career record for career games started. Lowe has now started in 44 consecutive games.
- RB Chase Brown recorded 150 rushing yards, his third game of the season with at least 100 rushing yards. Brown has now eclipsed the century mark five times in his career as an Illini.
- Brown has now moved into Illinois' top-30 in career rushing yards, coming in at No. 29 with 1,412 in Orange and Blue. Including his 352 yards as a freshman at Western Michigan, Brown now has 1,764 rushing yards in his collegiate career.
- DB Kerby Joseph sealed the Illini victory with his fourth interception of the season to end Minnesota's final offensive possession. Joseph leads the Illini defense on the season in both interceptions (4) and fumble recoveries (3).

## GAME 11

ILLINOIS ..... 23  
 #18/17 IOWA ..... 33  
 NOV. 20, 2021  
 KINNICK STADIUM // IOWA CITY, IOWA // 64,132

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	F
Illinois	10	3	3	7	23
Iowa	7	10	3	13	33

### SCORING SUMMARY

**First Quarter**  
 ILL: Ford 13 yd pass from Peters (McCourt kick), 8:37 (12-75, 6:23)  
 ILL: McCourt 46 yd FG, 3:20 4-0, 01:21  
 IOW: Jones 100 yd kickoff return (Shudak kick), 3:05 (00-00, 10-7)

**Second Quarter**  
 IOW: Bruce 2 yd rush (Shudak kick), 14:08 (7-50, 2:22)  
 IOW: Shudak 51 yd FG, 6:41 (11-58, 6:26)  
 ILL: McCourt 45 yd FG, 3:13 (8-48, 3:28)

**Third Quarter**  
 IOW: Shudak 48 yd FG, 9:12 (11-42, 05:48)  
 ILL: McCourt 53 yd FG, 2:46 (5-45, 01:55)

**Fourth Quarter**  
 IOW: Shudak 29 yd FG, 9:53 (5-7, 01:34)  
 IOW: Shudak 30 yd FG, 1:55 (7-43, 03:42)  
 IOW: Campbell 32 yd interception return (Shudak kick), 1:36 (0-0, 0:19)  
 ILL: Williams 16 yd pass from Peters (McCourt kick), 0:31 (5-75, 01:05)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	ILLINOIS	IOWA
First Downs	11	18
Rushes-Yards	25-64	52-172
Passing Yards	248	83
Comp-Att-Int	16-36-2	6-18-1
Total Yards	312	255
Punts-Avg	7-47.3	4-46.5
Kickoff Returns	0	4
Penalties-Yards	10-96	3-22
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	0-0
Sacks By	2-14	2-19
Third-down Conv.	4 of 16	5 of 16
Time of Possession	25:42	34:01

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - Brown, C. 13-42-0, McCray 6-16-0  
 IOWA-Goodspon 27-132-0, Williams 10-56-0  
**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Peters 16-36-238-2-2  
 IOWA - Morgan 6-17-83-1-0  
**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Washington 3-61-0, Williams 2-36-1,  
 IOWA - Bruce IV 2-45-0, Ragaini 2-20-0  
**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - Gay 10, 5.5-12; Witherspoon 7, 1.0-4; Newton 7, 1.0-11. IOWA - Campbell 8, 0.0-0 Benson 7, 0.0-0, Lee 4, 1.0-10

### GAME NOTES

- The Fighting Illini improve to 4-6 (3-4 B1G) following Saturday's win at Minnesota (6-3, 4-2 B1G).
- The Fighting Illini defense held Iowa to season-low 83 passing yards, the fewest passing yards given up in a game since allowing 82 passing yards at Northwestern on Dec. 12, 2020.
- Illinois out-gained Iowa in the contest, racking up a 312-255 advantage in total offense including a 248-83 edge in passing yards.
- Senior OLB Isaiah Gay recorded career highs in total tackles (10) and tackles for loss (5.5).
- Gay's 5.5 TFLs are third in a single game in program history, and the most by an Illini player against a Big Ten opponent.
- McCourt's 53-yarder at the 2:46 mark of the third quarter tied his season-long (vs. UTSA) and matched the longest FG in program history in a Big Ten road game (Dave Finzer, at Purdue, 10/15/77)
- McCourt has now hit 8 field goals of 50+ yards in his career, extending his Illinois program record.
- Kerby Joseph, who entered the game ranked fifth nationally in interception, recorded his fifth of the season in the fourth quarter.
- Ford tallied his second touchdown of the season, hauling in a 13-yard strike from Brandon Peters on the game's opening drive.

## GAME 12

NORTHWESTERN ..... 14  
 ILLINOIS ..... 47  
 NOV. 27, 2021  
 MEMORIAL STADIUM // CHAMPAIGN, ILL. // 27,624

### SCORING BY QUARTER

Team	1	2	3	4	F
Northwestern	0	7	0	7	14
Illinois	14	23	3	7	47

### SCORING SUMMARY

**First Quarter**  
 ILL: Barker 8 yd run (McCourt kick), 8:26 (1-8,0:05)  
 ILL: Williams 39 yd pass from Peters (McCourt kick), 6:08 (2-51,0:35)

**Second Quarter**  
 ILL: Brown 1 yd run (McCourt kick), 12:50 (7-76,02:20)  
 ILL: Williams 21 yd run (McCourt kick), 11:22 (1-21,0:08)  
 NW: Hilinski 1 yd run (Kuhbanderick), 6:58 (11-75, 4:24)  
 ILL: McCourt 28 yd field goal, 4:07 (7-65,2:51)  
 ILL: McCourt 37 yd field goal, 1:44 (4-8, 1:25)  
 ILL: McCourt 25 yd field goal, 0:00, 98-55,01:24)

**Third Quarter**  
 ILL: McCourt 49 yd field goal, 8:15 (8-30, 4:39)

**Fourth Quarter**  
 ILL: McCray 6 yd run (McCourt kick), 7:59 (11-50,6:14)  
 NWU: Hull 1 yd run (Olsenkick), 0:24 (15-81,7:27)

### TEAM STATISTICS

Category	NORTHWESTERN	ILLINOIS
First Downs	14	18
Rushes-Yards	48-118	38-217
Passing Yards	123	242
Comp-Att-Int	12-25-1	14-23-1
Total Yards	241	429
Punts-Avg	8-37	3-43
Kickoff Returns	1	0
Penalties-Yards	3-25	4-50
Fumbles-Lost	2-1	0-0
Sacks By	1-6	3-20
Third-down Conv.	6 of 19	5 of 13
Time of Possession	33:31	26:29

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**RUSHING (Carries-Yards-TD):** ILL - Brown, C. 14-112-1, McCray 12-43-1  
 NWU - Hull 32-107-1, Clair 5-24-0  
**PASSING (Comp-Att-INT-TD-Yds):** ILL - Peters 14-23-1-1-242  
 NWU - Hilinski 12-23-1-0-123  
**RECEIVING (Rec-Yards-TD):** ILL - Williams 7-113-1, Washington 2-68-0,  
 NWU - Washington 6-74-0, Mangieri 1-18-0  
**TACKLE LEADERS (Tackles, TFL-Yds):** ILL - Gay 10, 5.5-12; Witherspoon 7, 1.0-4; Newton 7, 1.0-11. NWU - Bergin 15, 1.0-1 McIntryre 11, 0.0-0, Azema 11, 0.0-0

### GAME NOTES

- The Fighting Illini improve to 5-7 (4-5 B1G) following Saturday's win against Northwestern (3-9, 1-8 B1G).
- Illinois moves to 56-54-5 all-time against Northwestern.
- Illinois snapped a six-game losing streak to Northwestern with its first win over the Wildcats since a 47-33.
- Bret Bielema is now 3-1 all-time as a head coach against Northwestern. He is the first Illinois head coach to win his first Illini game against Northwestern since John Mackovic in 1988.
- The Illini's 459 total offensive yards against Northwestern is the Illini's most yards against Northwestern since totaling 473 yards in a 38-35 win in Champaign on October 1, 2011.
- The Illini's 33-point margin of victory is the biggest margin by the Illini against Northwestern since a 49-point Illinois win (63-14) in Evanston on November 25, 1989.
- The Illini's 47 points scored against Northwestern is the most points scored by the Illini against the Wildcats since a 47-33 win in Evanston on November 29, 2014.
- The Illinois defense held Northwestern to just 14 points, the fewest points allowed by Illinois against Northwestern since holding the Wildcats to seven points in a 29-7 win on Dad's Day in Champaign on November 20, 1999.
- Illinois' 37 first half points against the Wildcats is the most first half points in Big Ten play since 2000. The previous high was 35 points against Indiana in 2002.
- Illinois out-gained Northwestern in the contest, racking up a 459-241 advantage in total offense, including a 242-123 edge in passing yards and a 217-118 in rushing yards.



**THE 2022 FIGHTING ILLINI**

## 2022 ILLINOIS FOOTBALL STAFF

### COACHES

Bret Bielema » Head Football Coach  
 Ryan Walters » Defensive Coordinator  
 Barry Lunney Jr. » Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks Coach  
 George McDonald » Assistant Head Coach/Wide Receivers Coach  
 Kevin Kane » Associate Head Coach/Outside Linebackers Coach  
 Bart Miller » Offensive Line Coach  
 Andy Buh » Linebackers Coach  
 Terrance Jamison » Defensive Line Coach  
 Aaron Henry » Defensive Backs Coach  
 Ben Miller » Special Teams Coordinator/Tight Ends Coach  
 Cory Patterson » Running Backs Coach  
 Sean Snyder » Special Teams Coordinator/Specialists Coach

### GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Vincent Jefferies Jr. » Graduate Assistant Coach, Offense  
 Tyler King » Graduate Assistant Coach, Offense  
 Joe Dineen » Graduate Assistant Coach, Defense  
 Preston Gordon » Graduate Assistant Coach, Defense

### ANALYSTS

Danny Cameron » Offensive Quality Control  
 Adam Kleffner » Offensive Analyst  
 Courtney Messingham » Offensive Analyst  
 Taylor Reed » Offensive Analyst  
 Grant O'Brien » Defensive Analyst  
 Greg Froelich » Special Teams Analyst  
 Ryan Simerson » Defense Quality Control  
 Alex Panos » Defense Quality Control

### OPERATIONS

Mark Taurisani » Assistant Director of Athletics, Football Chief of Staff  
 Pete Roley » Director of Football Operations

### STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

Tank Wright » Director of Football Strength and Conditioning  
 GC Yerry » Assistant Strength Coach  
 Matt Manninger » Assistant Strength Coach  
 Nick Elicone » Assistant Strength Coach  
 Colin Kenyon » Assistant Strength Coach

### RECRUITING

Patrick Embleton » Executive Director of Personnel and Recruiting  
 Nate McNeal » Director of Player Personnel  
 Patrick Pierson » Director of Football Branding and Creative Media  
 Jay Kaiser » Director of College Personnel and NFL Liaison  
 Maya Green » Director of Recruiting Operations  
 Pat Ryan » Director of Illinois High School Relations  
 Drake Leeper » Assistant Director of Personnel  
 Chip Vaughn » Assistant Director of Personnel  
 Connor Hannan » Director of Football Graphic Design

### VIDEO

Joe Maggio » Director of Video  
 Brendan McGuire » Assistant Director of Football Video

### NUTRITION

Tara Tralewski » Head Football Nutritionist

### EQUIPMENT

Jake Rosch » Director of Football Equipment Operations  
 Kenny Pleimann » Assistant Football Equipment Manager

### SPORTS MEDICINE

Jeremy Busch » Assistant Athletic Director, Head Football Athletic Trainer  
 Chase Louthan » Assistant Athletic Trainer  
 Nick Eller » Assistant Athletic Trainer  
 Emily Hahn » Assistant Athletic Trainer  
 Zac Williams » Assistant Athletic Trainer



## 2022 ILLINOIS FOOTBALL ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	ELIG.	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL	PREVIOUS COLLEGE
0	Josh McCray	RB	6-1	235	So.	Enterprise, Ala.	Enterprise	
1	Kionte Curry	DB	6-0	200	R-Fr.	Mims, Fla.	Cocoa	
1	Isaiah Williams	WR	5-10	180	So.	St. Louis, Mo.	Trinity Catholic	
2	Chase Brown	RB	5-11	205	Jr.	London, Ontario	St. Stephens Episcopal (Fla.)	Western Michigan
3	Tommy DeVito	QB	6-2	210	Sr.	Cedar Grove, N.J.	Don Bosco Prep	Syracuse
3	DD Snyder II	DB	6-0	180	R-Fr.	Tampa, Fla.	Tampa Catholic	
4	Jer'Zhan Newton	DL	6-2	295	So.	St. Petersburg, Fla.	Clearwater Central Catholic	
4	KhMari Thompson	WR	6-1	210	Jr.	Lawrenceville, Ga.	Central Gwennett	Missouri
5	Caleb Griffin	K	6-3	215	Jr.	Danville, Ill.	Danville	
5	Calvin Hart Jr.	LB	6-1	230	Jr.	Fort Lauderdale, Fla.	American Heritage	North Carolina State
6	Ashton Hollins	WR	6-5	180	Fr.	Lucedale, Miss.	George County	
6	Terrell Jennings	DB	6-1	190	Sr.	Knob Hill, Colo.	Pine Creek	Minnesota State
7	Brian Hightower	WR	6-3	215	Jr.	Los Angeles, Calif.	IMG Academy (Fla.)	Miami (Fla.)
7	Kendall Smith	DB	6-1	205	Sr.	Bolingbrook, Ill.	Bolingbrook	
8	Tarique Barnes	LB	6-1	230	Jr.	Memphis, Tenn.	Cordova	
8	Shawn Miller	WR	6-1	195	Fr.	Chandler, Ariz.	IMG Academy (Fla.)	
9	Artur Sitkowski	QB	6-5	225	Jr.	Old Bridge, N.J.	IMG Academy (Fla.)	Rutgers
10	Donovan Leary	QB	6-2	215	Fr.	Sicklerville, N.J.	Timber Creek	
10	Tahveon Nicholson	DB	5-11	180	So.	Jacksonville, Fla.	Lee	
11	Jake Huber	QB	6-1	205	R-Fr.	Spring Grove, Ill.	Richmond-Burton	
11	Jonah Morris	WR	6-4	220	Sr.	Akron, Ohio	Hoban	Northern Colorado
12	Elijah Mc-Cantos	DB	6-0	180	Fr.	Miami, Fla.	Edison	
12	Kirkland Michaux	QB	6-4	225	Fr.	Austin, Texas	Westlake	Blinn JC
13	Matthew Bailey	DB	6-2	205	Fr.	Moline, Ill.	Moline	
13	Pat Bryant	WR	6-3	195	So.	Jacksonville, Fla.	Atlantic Coast	
14	Xavier Scott	DB	5-11	185	Fr.	Riviera Beach, Fla.	Dwyer	
14	Casey Washington	WR	6-2	200	Jr.	Round Rock, Texas	Pflugerville	
15	Prince Green	DB	6-3	215	R-Fr.	Griffin, Ga.	Griffin	
15	Jameson Sheehan	QB	6-4	205	Fr.	Cary, Ill.	Cary-Grove	
16	Will McManus	K	5-10	185	Fr.	Glyndon, Md.	The Hun School (N.J.)	
17	Gabe Jacas	OLB	6-3	265	Fr.	Port St. Lucie, Fla.	Fort Pierce Central	
17	Ryan Johnson	QB	6-4	225	Sr.	Green Bay, Wis.	Ashwaubenon	Northern Michigan
18	Chase Miller	WR	6-1	180	Fr.	Baltimore, Md.	IMG Academy (Fla.)	
19	Eian Pugh	WR	6-3	170	Fr.	Naperville, Ill.	Fenwick	
19	Hugh Robertson	P	6-2	225	R-Fr.	Melbourne, Australia	Assumption College Kilmore	
20	Naivyan Cargill	TE	6-4	230	Fr.	Riviera Beach, Fla.	Palm Beach Gardens	
20	Tyler Strain	DB	5-9	180	R-Fr.	Pace, Fla.	Pace (Fla.)	
21	Aidan Laughery	RB	5-11	200	Fr.	Gibson City, Ill.	GCMS	
21	Jartavius Martin	DB	6-0	195	Sr.	Lehigh Acres, Fla.	Lehigh Acres	
22	Chase Hayden	RB	5-10	205	Sr.	Memphis, Tenn.	Saint George's Independent	East Carolina
22	Peyton Vining	DB	6-2	200	Sr.	Bradenton, Fla.	Saint Stephens	Denison
23	TeRah Edwards	DL	6-2	320	R-Fr.	Groveport, Ohio	Groveport Madison	Northwestern
23	Reggie Love III	RB	5-11	205	So.	St. Louis, Mo.	Trinity Catholic	
24	Nick Fedanzo	RB	6-0	210	So.	Lombard, Ill.	Montini Catholic	
24	Tyson Rooks	DB	6-4	190	Fr.	St. Simons Island, Ga.	Glynn Academy	
25	Jordan Anderson	RB	6-4	240	Fr.	Naperville, Ill.	Joliet Catholic	
25	Jared Badie	OLB	6-3	225	Fr.	Aurora, Ill.	Oswego East	
26	Mike Manning	DB	5-8	190	So.	Frankfort, Ill.	Lincoln-Way East	Butler
27	Matthew Bobak	DB	5-11	200	R-Fr.	Hinsdale, Ill.	Hinsdale Central	
28	Dylan Rosiek	LB	6-1	225	R-Fr.	East Lake, Fla.	East Lake	
29	TJ Griffin	DB	6-0	200	Fr.	Hickory Hills, Ill.	Amos Alonzo Stagg	
30	Sydney Brown	DB	6-0	205	Sr.	London, Ontario	St. Stephens Episcopal (Fla.)	
31	Devon Witherspoon	DB	6-0	180	Jr.	Pensacola, Fla.	Pine Forest	
32	Tailon Leitzsey	DB	6-0	190	Sr.	Laurel, Md.	Riverside	Missouri Baptist
33	Ezekiel Holmes	OLB	6-5	245	Jr.	Wichita Falls, Texas	Hirschi	
34	Ryan Meed	LB	6-1	230	So.	Brooklyn, N.Y.	Canarsie	
35	Grayson Griffin	DB	5-11	180	Fr.	Aurora, Ill.	St. Francis	
36	Lane Hansen	LS	6-0	220	R-Fr.	East Lake, Fla.	East Lake	
36	Ben Schultz	OLB	6-3	230	So.	Champaign, Ill.	Central	

## 2022 ILLINOIS FOOTBALL ROSTER

37	Solo Turner	DB	6-2	220	So.	Frisco, Texas	Prestonwood Christian	Hawaii
38	Isaac Darkangelo	LB	6-1	230	Sr.	Brighton, Mich.	Detroit Catholic Central	
39	Aidan Hall	LS	6-2	205	So.	Glen Ellyn, Ill.	Benet Academy	
39	Kenenna Odeluga	LB	6-1	230	R-Fr.	South Holland, Ill.	Mount Carmel	
40	Lucas Althaus	TE	6-6	240	R-Fr.	Alpha, Ill.	Alwood	
40	Shammond Cooper	OLB	6-2	220	So.	St. Louis, Mo.	Trinity Catholic	
41	Preston Engel	LS	6-0	250	Jr.	Normal, Ill.	Normal Community	
41	James Kreutz	LB	6-0	210	Fr.	Bannockburn, Ill.	Loyola Academy	
42	Michael Marchese	TE	6-4	235	Sr.	Vernon Hills, Ill.	Stevenson	
42	Luke Zardzin	LB	6-0	205	R-Fr.	Mount Prospect, Ill.	Prospect	
43	Griffin Moore	TE	6-4	250	So.	Bloomington, Ill.	Bloomington	
45	Malachi Hood	LB	6-2	220	Fr.	Plainfield, Ill.	Joliet Catholic	
48	Bryce Barnes	DL	6-2	280	Jr.	Gibson City, Ill.	Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley	
48	Mike Cerniglia Jr.	TE	6-3	240	So.	Madison, Wis.	Memorial	Northern Illinois
49	Seth Coleman	OLB	6-5	240	So.	Melbourne, Fla.	Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy	
52	Verdis Brown	DL	6-4	345	Jr.	Chicago, Ill.	IMG Academy (Fla.)	
53	Devin Hale	OL	6-0	310	R-Fr.	Springfield, Ill.	Sacred Heart-Griffin	
54	Julian Pearl	OL	6-6	315	Jr.	Danville, Ill.	Danville	
55	Sed McConnell	DL	6-3	280	R-Fr.	Atlanta, Ga.	Westlake	
56	Magnus Møller	OL	6-9	310	Fr.	Veje, Denmark	Rødkilde Gymnasium	
57	Evan Kirts	DL	6-5	300	So.	Evergreen Park, Ill.	Brother Rice	
58	Matt Fries	OL	6-5	275	Fr.	Cranford, N.J.	Cranford	
62	Sam Tsaglis	OL	6-2	275	Fr.	Arlington Heights, Ill.	Prospect	
63	Alex Palczewski	OL	6-6	315	Sr.	Mount Prospect, Ill.	Prospect	
64	Josh Kreutz	OL	6-2	280	R-Fr.	Bannockburn, Ill.	Loyola Academy	
65	Joey Okla	OL	6-2	325	Fr.	Hartland, Wis.	Arrowhead	
66	Jordyn Slaughter	OL	6-5	325	Jr.	Belleville, Ill.	Althoff Catholic	
68	Zachary Barlev	OL	6-5	305	R-Fr.	Bolingbrook, Ill.	Plainfield East	
70	Tommy Cronin	OL	6-4	310	So.	Oak Park, Ill.	Oak Park River Forest	
71	Hunter Whitenack	OL	6-7	345	Fr.	New Carlisle, Ind.	New Prairie	
72	Zy Crisler	OL	6-6	330	So.	Crystal Springs, Miss.	Copiah Academy	Mississippi Gulf Coast CC
73	Josh Gesky	OL	6-5	325	R-Fr.	Manteno, Ill.	Manteno	
74	Dylan Davis	OL	6-4	300	So.	Sarasota, Fla.	St. Stephen's Episcopal	Furman
75	Alex Pihlstrom	OL	6-6	305	Sr.	Glen Ellyn, Ill.	Glenbard West	
76	Clayton Leonard	OL	6-4	290	Fr.	Danforth, Ill.	Iroquois West	
78	Isaiah Adams	OL	6-5	315	Jr.	Ajax, Ontario	McLellan Catholic	Garden City CC (Kan.)
79	Luciano Elias	OL	6-5	320	Fr.	Wilmette, Ill.	New Trier	
80	Hank Beatty	WR	5-11	185	Fr.	Rochester, Ill.	Rochester	
81	Daniel Edwards	WR	5-11	160	R-Fr.	Winter Park, Fla.	Winter Park	
82	Luke Ford	TE	6-6	265	Sr.	Cartersville, Ill.	Cartersville	Georgia
83	Keion Battle	WR	6-1	200	R-Fr.	Plainfield, Ill.	Oswego East	Northern Illinois
84	Owen Anderson	TE	6-4	230	Fr.	Skillman, N.J.	The Hun School	
85	Miles Scott	WR	5-11	200	R-Fr.	Dolton, Ill.	Thornton Fractional North	
86	Weston Adams	WR	5-11	195	Fr.	Shell, Wyo.	IMG Academy (Fla.)	
87	Kody Case	WR	5-10	180	Sr.	Lake City, Iowa	South Central Calhoun	South Dakota
88	Henry Boyer	TE	6-6	265	Fr.	Chicago, Ill.	Brother Rice	
88	Keith Randolph Jr.	DL	6-5	305	So.	Belleville, Ill.	Belleville West	
89	Tip Reiman	TE	6-5	260	So.	Rapid City, S.D.	O'Gorman	
90	Alec Bryant	OLB	6-3	240	R-Fr.	Pearland, Texas	Shadow Creek	Virginia Tech
91	Jamal Woods	DL	6-2	290	Sr.	Hueytown, Ala.	Hueytown	
93	Calvin Avery	DL	6-2	325	Sr.	Dallas, Texas	Bishop Dunne	
94	Raashaan Wilkins	DL	6-3	315	Jr.	Chicago, Ill.	Mt. Carmel	Vanderbilt
95	Nico Crawford	LS	6-1	250	Fr.	Dublin, Ohio	Dublin Scioto	
96	Josh Leff	P	5-10	190	Fr.	Westlake Village, Calif.	Sierra Canyon	
98	Deon Pate	OLB	6-2	265	Sr.	Jacksonville, Fla.	Trinity Christian Academy	
98	Fabrizio Pinton	K/P	6-3	230	R-Fr.	Houston, Texas	The Woodlands	Air Force
99	Christian Lorenzo	DL	6-3	285	Fr.	DeKalb, Ill.	DeKalb	

Fr. and R-Fr. differentiates between true and second- or third-year freshmen

## 78 ISAIAH ADAMS

OL, 6-5, 315, JR.

AJAX, CANADA / MCCLELLAN CATHOLIC / GARDEN CITY CC (KAN.)

### 2021 Sophomore (Garden City CC):

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports
- » No. 21 junior college recruit in the nation by 247Sports
- » No. 5 junior college offensive tackle in the nation by 247Sports
- » 2021 NJCAA D1 All-America first team
- » Transferred from Wilfrid Laurier University in Warloo, Canada
- » Offers included Arizona, Bowling Green, Buffalo, Colorado, Fresno State, Hawaii, Jackson State, Kansas, Liberty, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Ohio, Syracuse, Texas State, UCF, and West Virginia

### High School:

- » Played for the Durham Dolphins Football Club
- » Played for head coach Richard Karikari
- » Team's three-time offensive lineman of the year
- » 2016 OVFL All-Star
- » 2016 Team Ontario
- » Also played basketball and rugby

### Personal:

- » Born July 21, 2000
- » Son of Christine Trotter and Derrick Adams
- » One brother, Justin, and two sisters, Ally and Brianna
- » Plans to major in sociology
- » Chose Illinois because, "It will give me the best chance at succeeding on the field and off the field. From the resources in the football facility to the resources in the classroom Illinois, has it all. Illinois has great football coaches that will push you but also great professors that will lead you. I'm excited to start this journey at Illinois and I thought there would be no better place to help me succeed at life."

## 86 WESTON ADAMS

WR, 5-11, 195, FR.

SHELL, WYO. / IMG ACADEMY (FLA.)

### High School:

- » Played for head coach Bobby Acosta at IMG Academy
- » 2020 IMG Wide Receiver MVP

### Personal:

- » Born January 31, 2004
- » Son of Jeff and Kim Adams
- » One sister, Brea, and one brother, Korbin
- » Hometown of Shell, Wyoming, has a population of 84
- » Plans to be a football coach following his playing career
- » Plans to major in engineering

## 40 LUCAS ALTHAUS

TE, 6-6, 240, R-FR.

ALPHA, ILL. / ALWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

### 2021 Freshman:

- » Did not play in a game

### High School:

- » Played for Bruce Redding
- » Four-time All-Lincoln Trail Conference first team
- » 2019 All-Western Illinois Offense
- » 2019 Dispatch-Argus All-Area Team
- » 2020 Preseason Class 1A All-State Offense first team
- » Also played basketball, baseball, track and field
- » Academic All-Conference 2018-2021

### Personal:

- » Born September 24, 2002
- » Father, David, was a member of the Marching Illini

- » Parents and siblings all attended the University of Illinois
- » 2020-2021 FFA State Proficiency Winner in the area of Wildlife Production and Management
- » Chose Illinois because "It was my 'dream' school. I have always wanted to play in Memorial Stadium. When Coach Bielema took the job here, I knew I had to find a way to become part of the program. My family and I also have always been Illini fans. We have gone to football games here for the past 18 years."
- » Majoring in agribusiness markets and management

## 25 JORDAN ANDERSON

RB, 6-4, 240, FR.

NAPERVILLE, ILL. / JOLIET CATHOLIC

### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #59 (247), #67 (On3), #81 (ESPN)
- » State ranks: #16 (247), #17 (ESPN), #21 (On3), #24 (Rivals)
- » Played for head coach Jake Jaworski at Joliet Catholic
- » Three-year letterwinner
- » Two-time All-Chicago Catholic League
- » Three-time all-area
- » 306 rushing yards in the 2021 IHSA Class 4A championship game to set the 4A state record and ran for four touchdowns and caught another touchdown
- » 2021 Spring Illinois High School Football Coaches Association 5A All-State first team
- » 1,544 rushing yards and 31 touchdowns as a senior
- » 2019 Herald-News Football Player of the Year
- » Honor Roll
- » Offers included Ball State, Bowling Green, Central Michigan, Eastern Michigan, Miami (Ohio), and Toledo

### Personal:

- » Born September 9, 2003
- » Son of Johnny Anderson Jr. and Michelle Broyles
- » Stepmother is Tracy Anderson
- » One brother, Charles
- » Chose Illinois because, "Really enjoyed the family atmosphere and the ability to work with outstanding coaches to turn around my in-state program."
- » Plans to major in marketing

## 84 OWEN ANDERSON

TE, 6-4, 230, FR.

SKILLMAN, N.J. / THE HUN SCHOOL

### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #33 (ESPN), #35 (On3), #87 (247)
- » State ranks: #12 (On3), #22 (247), #24 (ESPN)
- » Played for head coach Todd Smith at The Hun School of Princeton
- » 2020 all-area first team
- » 2019 and 2020 all-prep
- » Also played lacrosse and ran track in high school
- » Offers included Buffalo, Georgia Tech, Liberty, Massachusetts, Michigan State, and Navy

### Personal:

- » Born December 12, 2002
- » Son of Aileen O'Shea and Joe Devaney
- » Two sisters, Charlotte Anderson and Maeva Anderson
- » Uncle, Tim O'Shea, played football at Yale
- » Stepfather, Joe Devaney, played football at Manhattan
- » Chose Illinois because, "The great academic opportunities and also being able to be a part of a great program with an amazing coaching staff."
- » Plans to major in business

- » Plans to pursue a career in marketing or real estate following his playing career

## 93 CALVIN AVERY

DL, 6-2, 325, SR.

DALLAS, TEXAS. / BISHOP DUNNE

### 2021 Junior:

- » Played in 11 games with two starts
- » 11 tackles, 1.5 TFLs, and 0.5 sacks on the season
- » Three tackles and 0.5 TFL in Illinois' road win over No. 20 Minnesota

### 2020 Junior:

- » Played in seven games and made two starts
- » Made first career start at Northwestern 12/12/20
- » 14 tackles and 1.0 sacks on the season

### 2019 Sophomore:

- » Played in 12 games at defensive tackle
- » Eight tackles, 1.0 TFL, one blocked kick on the season
- » Blocked extra point against Nebraska 9/21/19

### 2018 Freshman:

- » Played all 12 games
- » 18 tackles, 1.5 TFLs and one blocked kick on the season
- » Made Illinois debut in season opener vs. Kent State 9/1/18
- » First career tackle against Penn State 9/21/18
- » Blocked extra point against Purdue 10/13/18

### High School:

- » Four-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN and Rivals
- » Ranked No. 156 recruit in the nation by Rivals, No. 232 by ESPN and No. 299 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 9 defensive tackle in the nation by Rivals, No. 16 by ESPN and No. 23 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 34 recruit in Texas by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 7 recruit in the Dallas-Fort Worth area by the Star-Telegram
- » 2017 Under Armour All-America Game participant
- » 2017 US Army All-American Game invitation
- » 68 tackles, 12 sacks as a junior
- » 2017 3A Texas Associated Press Sports Editors All-State
- » 2017 Texas Assn. of Private and Parochial Schools All-State
- » Verbally committed to Illinois in August 2017
- » Offers included Arizona State, Arkansas, Cal, Colorado, Florida State, Indiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Notre Dame, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Oregon State, TCU, Texas, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, USC and Washington

### Personal:

- » Born Sept. 4, 1999
- » Majoring in sociology

### CAREER HIGHS

Tackles: 5 at Northwestern 12/12/20, at Penn St. 12/19/20

Sacks: 1 at Penn St. 12/19/20, vs Rutgers 11/02/19

Tackles For Loss: 1 4 times

### DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2018	ILL	12	6	12	18	1.5-4	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019	ILL	12	2	6	8	1-4	0	0	0	0	1	0
2020	ILL	7	10	4	14	1-6	0	0	0	0	1	0
2021	ILL	11	7	3	10	1-3	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		42	25	25	50	4.5-17	0	0	0	0	2	0

## 25 JARED BADIE

OLB, 6-3, 225, FR.

AURORA, ILL. / OSWEGO EAST

### High School:

- » Four-star recruit by On3
- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #25 (On3), #49 (Rivals), #67 (247), #90 (ESPN)
- » State ranks: #7 (On3), #12 (247), #18 (Rivals), #21 (ESPN)
- » No. 240 recruit in the nation by On3

- » Played for head coach Tyson Leblanc at Oswego East
- » Three-year letterwinner
- » 2020 All-Southern Prairie Conference
- » 2020 All-State honorable mention
- » No. 3 rated linebacker in Illinois by 247Sports
- » Honor Roll for four years
- » Also wrestled and played basketball in high school
- » Offers included Arizona State, Buffalo, Cincinnati, Indiana, Iowa State, Kent State, Louisville, Michigan State, Minnesota, Nebraska, Purdue, Tennessee, Texas Tech, and Toledo

**Personal:**

- » Born October 17, 2003
- » Son of Joel and Judy Badie
- » Two sisters, Alisa and Riley
- » Father, Joel, was a national champion in track and field at North Central College
- » Uncle, Jermaine Badie, graduated from the University of Illinois
- » Chose Illinois because, "The family atmosphere that they have built between the coaches and players, and especially the recruits coming in for the Class of 2022. Illinois as a whole provides me an opportunity to be successful on and off field and will help me achieve my dreams and goals to the fullest of my ability."
- » Committed to Illinois on July 4, 2021
- » Plans to have a career in finance following his playing career
- » Plans to major in finance

## 13 MATTHEW BAILEY

**DB, 6-2, 205, FR.**  
**MOLINE, ILL. / MOLINE**

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports
- » Position ranks: #130 (247)
- » State ranks: #37 (247)
- » Played for head coach Mike Morrissey at Moline
- » 2021 Illinois High School Football Coaches Association 7A All-State first team
- » 2021 Quad City Times Player of the Year
- » All-Western Big 8 offense, defense, and special teams
- » Academic All-Western Big 8
- » Set Moline records for single-season receiving yards (802) and touchdown receptions (10) as a senior

**Personal:**

- » Born August 4, 2004
- » Son of Dwight Bailey and Michelle Westerdale
- » Two brothers, Immanuel and Avrom
- » Chose Illinois because, "The coaches made me feel special and welcomed, and I'm grateful because that is hard to find. Also, the academic side of things at Illinois are something to look forward too."
- » Plans to major in kinesiology
- » Plans to become a physical therapist or an athletic trainer following his playing career

## 68 ZACH BARLEV

**OL, 6-5, 305, R-FR.**  
**BOLINGBROOK, ILL. / PLAINFIELD EAST HS**

**2021 Freshman:**

- » Made Illinois debut and first career start at No. 7 Penn State 10/23/21, helping the Illini win the longest game in college football history (9 OT)

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and ESPN
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Position ranks: #84 (247), #107 (ESPN)

- » State ranks: #44 (ESPN), #46 (247)
- » All-Conference and All-State in wrestling as a senior
- » Also competed in baseball, golf, track and field
- » Committed to Illinois on July 24, 2020
- » Offers included Bowling Green, Columbia and Harvard

**Personal:**

- » Born June 23, 2003
- » Son of Scott and Jean Barlev
- » Chose Illinois because, "It is my state's school."
- » Majoring in mathematics

## 48 BRYCE BARNES

**OLB, 6-2, 280, JR.**  
**GIBSON CITY, ILL. / GIBSON CITY-MELVIN-SIBLEY**

**2021 Sophomore:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Played in 11 games
- » Three tackles on the season

**2020 Sophomore:**

- » Played in all eight games and started two at defensive tackle
- » Made first career start at Northwestern 12/12/20
- » Three tackles and 0.5 TFLs on the season

**2019 Freshman:**

- » Played in all 13 games, primarily on special teams
- » Made Illinois debut in the season opener against Akron

**High School:**

- » Champaign News-Gazette 2018-19 Male Athlete of the Year
- » Helped lead GCMS to back-to-back IHSA Class 2A State Championships in 2017 and '18
- » Played for head coach Mike Allen at GCMS
- » Also played basketball at GCMS, scoring over 1,000 career points and
- » Helping basketball team to third place at IHSA 2A state finals

**Personal:**

- » Born August 18, 2000
- » Chose Illinois because, "it is a top university and earning a degree from this school will be my ticket to any job I would like to get in the future."
- » Majoring in community health

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 3 at Iowa 11/20/21  
Tackles For Loss: 0.5 at Rutgers 11/14/20

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	NO	INT
2019	ILL	13	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	ILL	8	0	3	3	0.5-1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	11	3	0	3	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		32	3	3	6	0.5-1	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 8 TARIQUE BARNES

**LB, 6-1, 230, JR.**  
**MEMPHIS, TENN. / CORDOVA**

**2021 Sophomore:**

- » Phil Steele All-Big Ten fourth team
- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Played in all 12 games with 10 starts
- » 80 tackles, 6.0 TFLs, 2.0 sacks, one interception, five pass breakups, and two forced fumbles on the season
- » Tied for the team lead with two forced fumbles
- » Second on the team with 80 tackles
- » Third on the team with 44 solo tackles
- » Tied for third on the team with five pass breakups
- » Fourth on the team with 6.0 TFLs
- » Tied for fifth on the team with 2.0 sacks
- » 23rd in the Big Ten in tackles per game (6.6)
- » One interception returned for six yards, eight tackles and 0.5 TFL in Illinois' road win over No. 20 Minnesota 11/6/21

- » One forced fumble and career high 12 tackles vs. Wisconsin 10/9/21
- » Five tackles, 0.5 TFL and a pass breakup against Charlotte 10/2/21
- » Five tackles and 1.0 sacks at Purdue 9/25/21
- » Team-high 11 tackles against UTSA 9/4/21

**2020 Sophomore:**

- » Played in five games and started two at linebacker
- » Missed the last three games of the season with a leg injury
- » 25 tackles, 1.5 TFL, one sack, one interception, one fumble recovery on the season
- » First career interception at Nebraska 11/21/20
- » Made first career start at Rutgers 11/14/20
- » First career fumble recovery, touchdown, and sack at Wisconsin 10/23/20
- » One of two Big Ten players since 2000 to have 10 tackles, a sack, and a fumble recovery for a TD in a game (Tavon Wilson, Illinois, 10/8/2011 at Indiana)
- » University of Illinois Student-Athlete Advisory Committee

**2019 Freshman:**

- » Played in all 13 games, primarily on special teams
- » 13 tackles, one forced fumble on the season
- » Tied for the team lead in kickoff tackles (4)
- » Second on the team in special teams tackles (8)
- » Second on the team in punt return tackles (4)
- » Career-high four tackles at Michigan State 11/9/19 to help Illinois win 37-34 in the biggest comeback in program history
- » First career forced fumble at UConn 9/7/19 on kickoff coverage
- » Made Illinois debut in the season opener against Akron

**High School:**

- » Played for head coach Marcus Wimberly at Cordova
- » Led Cordova to the 2017 Tennessee 4A state title
- » Also wrestled and participated in track and field in high school
- » Principals List
- » Honor Roll

**Personal:**

- » Born November 23, 2000
- » Son of Darlene Shinault and Melvin Barnes
- » Four brothers, Tyler, Justyn, Meltavious, and Darrion
- » Chose Illinois because, "I felt that it would give me a good opportunity to grow and excel after college."
- » Majoring in advertising

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 12 vs Wisconsin 10/09/21  
Sacks: 1 at Wisconsin 10/23/20, at Purdue 09/25/21, vs Northwestern 11/27/21  
Tackles For Loss: 2 vs Northwestern 11/27/21  
Interceptions: 1 at Nebraska 11/21/20, at Minnesota 11/06/21

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2019	ILL	13	8	5	13	0-0	0	1	0	0	0	0
2020	ILL	5	12	13	25	1.5-10	0	0	1	0	1	1
2021	ILL	12	44	35	79	4.5-35	5	2	0	0	2	1
TOTAL		30	64	53	117	6-45	5	3	1	0	3	2

## 83 KEION BATTLE

**WR, 6-1, 200, R-FR.**  
**PLAINFIELD, ILL. / OSWEGO EAST / NORTHERN ILLINOIS**

**2021 Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game

**2020 Freshman (Northern Illinois):**

- » Played in two games

**High School:**

- » Played for Tyson Leblanc
- » All-area three times
- » All-Southwest Prairie three times
- » Also competed in track and field and was a state-qualifying long jumper

**Personal:**

- » Born June 3, 2002
- » Father, Kenny Battle, played for Illinois basketball in 1986-89 and was a captain of the 1989 Flyin' Illini Final Four team
- » Has four brothers and one sister
- » Sister, Ty, played basketball at Delaware
- » Majoring in chemistry

**80 HANK BEATTY****WR, 5-11, 185, FR.****ROCHESTER, ILL. / ROCHESTER****High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, On3, and ESPN, two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Position ranks: #116 (247), #171 (ESPN)
- » State ranks: #20 (247), #23 (ESPN)
- » Played for head coach Derek Leonard at Rochester
- » Led Rochester to the 2019 IHSA 5A state title
- » 12 receptions for 212 yards and three touchdowns in the 2019 state championship game to earn player of the game honors
- » 2021-22 Gatorade Illinois Football Player of the Year
- » First Illinois Gatorade Player of the Year to choose Illinois since Reilly O'Toole in 2010-11
- » 2021 Illinois High School Football Coaches Association 4A All-State first team
- » Central State 8 all-time leading scorer
- » Three-time all-state
- » 2019 MaxPreps All-American
- » Three-time academic all-conference
- » 1,899 passing yards, 1,371 rushing yards, and 23 passing touchdowns as a senior
- » Also played basketball and ran track in high school
- » Offers included Air Force, Central Michigan, Illinois State, Iowa State, Northern Illinois, Southern Illinois, and Western Illinois

**Personal:**

- » Born September 20, 2003
- » Son of Helen Kwong and Mark Beatty
- » One sister, Charlotte
- » Father, mother, grandmother, and grandfather all attended the University of Illinois
- » Chose Illinois because, "I love the culture and family here. I felt accepted and like I belonged here since the first time I spoke to the staff and other recruits and commits."

**27 MATTHEW BOBAK****DB, 5-11, 200, R-FR.****HINSDALE, ILL. / HINSDALE CENTRAL****2021 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Did not play in a game
- » Illinois Scout Team Special Teams Player of the Week following the win at Minnesota 11/6/21

**2020 Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game

**High School:**

- » Three-year letterwinner
- » 2018 All-West Suburban Conference
- » 2018 All-Area Honorable Mention
- » 2018 Hinsdale Central MVP
- » School record three touchdowns in a single playoff game
- » 2018 team rushing and scoring leader
- » Rushed for 1,132 yards and 11 touchdowns as a senior
- » Averaged 103 rushing yards per game as a senior
- » Averaged 5.4 yards per rush during his high school career
- » Led Hinsdale Central to a 8-3 record and state playoffs as a senior

- » Hinsdale Central Athlete of the Month October 2018

- » Also ran track and qualified for the state track meet
- » Honor Roll student

**Personal:**

- » Born Feb. 16, 2001
- » Son of Stan and Stella Bobak
- » Has two brothers, Dominic and Christian
- » Brother, Christian, played football at Illinois from 2017-21
- » Plans to attend med school
- » Plays the violin and guitar
- » Chose Illinois because, "Illinois has always been my dream, school and I had a great opportunity to play on the same team as my brother Christian."
- » Majoring in community health

**88 HENRY BOYER****TE, 6-6, 265, FR.****CHICAGO, ILL. / BROTHER RICE****High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #47 (ESPN), #50 (247), #53 (On3)
- » State ranks: #16 (On3), #19 (247), #25 (Rivals), #31 (ESPN)
- » Played for head coach Brian Badke at Brother Rice
- » Four-year letterwinner and starter
- » 2021 All-Chicago Catholic League
- » 2021 US Army All-American Bowl
- » No. 2 rated tight end in Illinois by 247Sports
- » Also played baseball in high school
- » High Honor Roll
- » Also offered by Kent State

**Personal:**

- » Born May 24, 2004
- » Son of Molly and Matt Boyer
- » Two brothers, Charlie and Jack
- » Chose Illinois because, "I wanted to be a part of a coaching staff and group of players looking to put Illinois in the right direction. I believe in their vision for the program and want to make it a special place."
- » Plans to either pursue a career in business or the medical field following his playing career

**2 CHASE BROWN****RB, 5-11, 205, JR.****LONDON, CANADA / ST. STEPHENS EPISCOPAL (FLA.) / WMU****2022 Junior:**

- » Athlon Preseason All-Big Ten second team
- » Only returning player in the nation with two of the nation's top 17 rushing games from 2021

**2021 Sophomore:**

- » All-Big Ten third team (coaches and media)
- » PFF All-Big Ten third team
- » Phil Steele All-Big Ten third team
- » Football Canada Jon Cornish Trophy finalist as one of the top five Canadian NCAA football players
- » Led Illinois with 170 carries for 1,005 rushing yards and five rushing touchdowns, along with 14 receptions for 142 receiving yards on the season
- » Third in the Big Ten in rushing yards per game (100.5)
- » Fifth in the Big Ten and 27th in the nation in rushing yards per carry (5.9)
- » Seventh in the Big Ten in rushing yards (1,005)
- » Seventh in the Big Ten in all-purpose yards per game (114.7)
- » 13th in the Big Ten in rushing touchdowns (5)
- » Tied for the team lead with five total touchdowns
- » Two-time Big Ten Offensive Player of the Week

- » Ran for 223 yards on 33 carries and one touchdown at #7 Penn State to help Illinois win the longest game in college football history (20-18, 9 OT)
- » Joined Howard Griffith (1990) and Rashard Mendenhall (2007) as the only players in program history with multiple 200-yard rushing games in a single season
- » Brown's 223 rushing yards at #7 Penn State were the most ever by an opponent at Beaver Stadium and the fourth-most ever against Penn State
- » Brown's 223 rushing yards at #7 Penn State were the most ever by an Illini against a ranked opponent
- » Career-high 257 rushing yards on 26 attempts and two touchdowns with an average of 9.9 yards per carry against Charlotte 10/2/2
- » Brown's 257 yards against Charlotte were the fourth-most in a single game in program history
- » Rushed for 147 on 30 carries in Illinois' road win over No. 20 Minnesota 11/6/21
- » The first Illini with two 145+-yard rushing games on the road since Rashard Mendenhall in 2007
- » Recorded 111 yards of total offense with 57 rushing yards on 14 attempts and a career-high and team-high 54 receiving yards on two catches against Maryland 9/17/21
- » Rushed for 41 yards and a touchdown on seven carries along with 28 yards on a career high four receptions against Virginia 9/11/21
- » Phil Steele Preseason All-Big Ten second team
- » Athlon Preseason All-Big Ten fourth team
- » PFF Preseason All-Big Ten honorable mention
- » Doak Walker Award watch list

**2020 Sophomore:**

- » All-Big Ten third team (media)
- » All-Big Ten honorable mention (coaches)
- » Football Canada 2020 Fans Choice Canadian NCAA Player of the Year
- » Played in all eight games and started six at running back
- » 104 carries for 540 yards, three touchdowns on the season
- » 11th in the Big Ten in yards per carry (5.2)
- » Seven receptions for 64 yards on the season
- » Ran the ball for 100+ yards in back-to-back games (Rutgers 11/14/20 and Nebraska 11/21/20)
- » Ran for a career high 131 yards on 17 carries at Rutgers 11/14/20
- » Carried the ball 11 times for 73 yards in his first start for Illinois against Purdue 10/31/20

**2019 Sophomore:**

- » Played in four games and redshirted the season
- » Three carries for 18 rushing yards on the season
- » Made his Illinois debut against Michigan 10/12/19
- » Granted a waiver on appeal to become immediately eligible to play in 2019, starting with the Michigan game 10/12/19
- » Transferred to Illinois with three years of eligibility remaining

**2019 Freshman (Western Michigan):**

- » Played in all 13 games
- » Season-high 15 carries and 52 rushing yards against Ohio 11/1/18
- » 71 carries for 352 yards (5.0 ypr), 10 rec. for 75 yards (7.5 ypc) and 12 kickoff returns for 227 yards (18.9 ypr) on season

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports Composite
- » No. 59 running back in the nation by 247Sports Composite
- » No. 144 recruit in Florida by 247Sports Composite
- » State champion and leading rusher in Manatee County
- » 2017 Offensive MVP, first team all-conference and second team all-state
- » School's all-time leading rusher, as a senior
- » 1,508 yards on 98 carries (15.9 yards/carry) and 150 yards per game with 27 touchdowns

- » Anchored the state champion 400-meter relay in track and field and holds school record in the 100-meter dash
- » Offers included Purdue, UCF, Syracuse, Illinois, Ole Miss, Indiana, Tulane and Wake Forest

**Personal:**

- » Born March 21, 2000
- » Son of Darren Issac and Raechel Brown
- » Twin brother, Sydney, and one sister, Mya
- » Twin brother, Sydney, also plays football at Illinois
- » Father played in CFL for three seasons
- » Father played for the London Beefeaters of the Canadian Junior Football League from 1991-92
- » Mother was a figure skater
- » Majoring in communication

**CAREER HIGHS**

Rushing Attempts: 33 at Penn St. 10/23/21  
 Rushing Yards: 257 vs Charlotte 10/02/21  
 Rushing Touchdowns: 2 at Nebraska 11/21/20, vs Charlotte 10/02/21  
 Longest Rushing: 80 vs Charlotte 10/02/21  
 Receptions: 4 at Virginia 09/11/21  
 Receiving Yards: 54 vs Maryland 09/17/21  
 Longest Reception: 33 at Penn St. 12/19/20, vs Maryland 09/17/21  
 Longest Kick Return: 28 vs Toledo 10/25/18

**RUSHING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	ATT	YDS	TD	LG	AVG/C	AVG/G
2018	WMU	13	71	352	0	29	5.0	27.1
2019	ILL	4	3	18	0	14	6.0	4.5
2020	ILL	8	104	540	3	39	5.2	67.5
2021	ILL	10	170	1005	5	80	5.9	100.5
ILL TOTAL		22	277	1563	8	80	5.6	71.0
TOTAL		35	348	1915	8	80	5.5	54.7

**RECEIVING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2018	WMU	13	10	75	0	22	0.8	7.5	5.8
2019	ILL	4	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2020	ILL	8	7	64	0	33	0.9	9.1	8.0
2021	ILL	10	14	142	0	33	1.4	10.1	14.2
ILL TOTAL		22	21	206	0	33	1.0	9.8	9.4
TOTAL		35	31	281	0	33	0.9	9.1	8.0

**ALL-PURPOSE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	RUSH	RCV	PR	KR	IR	TOTAL	AVG/G
2018	WMU	13	352	75	0	227	0	654	50.3
2019	ILL	4	18	0	0	15	0	33	8.3
2020	ILL	8	540	64	0	62	0	666	83.3
2021	ILL	10	1005	142	0	0	0	1147	114.7
ILL TOTAL		22	1563	206	0	77	0	1846	83.9
TOTAL		35	1915	281	0	304	0	2500	71.4

## 30 SYDNEY BROWN

DB, 6-0, 205, SR.

LONDON, CANADA / ST. STEPHENS EPISCOPAL (FLA.)

**2022 Senior:**

- » Athlon Preseason All-Big Ten second team

**2021 Junior:**

- » All-Big Ten honorable mention (coaches and media)
- » Started all 12 games
- » 81 tackles, 1.5 TFLs, 1.0 sack, three pass breakups, and two forced fumbles on the season
- » Led Illinois with 81 tackles, including a team-best 50 solo tackles
- » Tied for the team lead with two forced fumbles
- » 18th in the Big Ten in tackles per game (6.8)
- » Nine tackles, 1.5 TFL, 1.0 sack and one forced fumble in Illinois' road win over No. 20 Minnesota 11/6/21
- » Team-high six tackles and a forced fumble against Charlotte 10/2/21
- » Team-high seven tackles and a pass breakup against Purdue 9/25/21
- » No. 5 Canadian Football League draft prospect according to the CFL scouting bureau
- » Illinois team defensive MVP against Nebraska 8/28/21

**2020 Junior:**

- » Started six games at safety
- » Missed the final two games due to injury
- » 36 tackles, 0.5 TFL, one forced fumble on the season

- » First career forced fumble at Wisconsin 10/23/20
- » Athlon Preseason All-Big Ten second team
- » Phil Steele Preseason All-Big Ten fourth team

**2019 Sophomore:**

- » Played in 11 games and started 10 at safety
- » All-Big Ten third team (coaches)
- » All-Big Ten honorable mention (media)
- » 88 tackles, 2.5 TFLs, three interceptions on the season
- » Second in the Big Ten in interceptions (3) and sixth in tackles per game (8.0)
- » Tied for the team lead in interceptions (3) and was second in tackles (88)
- » Career-high 13 tackles, two interceptions, and a 76-yard interception returned for a touchdown at Michigan State 11/9/19 to help Illinois win 37-34 in the biggest comeback in program history
- » Did not play the first two games of the season due to injury

**2018 Freshman:**

- » Played and started in 10 games (seven starts at safety and three at nickel)
- » Tied for second-most starts by an Illinois true freshman defensive back, behind only Vontae Davis' 11
- » Second on the team in PBU's (5) and fifth in tackles (55)
- » 55 tackles, 2.0 TFLs, five PBU's, one interception and one QB hurry on season
- » First career interception against Purdue 10/13/18
- » First career start in the season opener vs. Kent State 9/1/18
- » Missed the South Florida and Iowa games with injuries

**High School:**

- » Transferred to St. Stephen's Episcopal School from London South Collegiate Institute
- » Played for head coach Todd Creneti at St. Stephen's
- » Led St. Stephen's Episcopal to back-to-back Sunshine State Athletic Conference independent state championships
- » 51 tackles, 7.0 TFLs, two interceptions, five passes defensed, one fumble recovery and one forced fumble as a senior
- » 81 tackles, 2.0 TFLs, one INT and five PBU's as a junior
- » Also ran track in high school
- » Florida state finalist in 400m, 4x400m and 4x100m as asenior
- » Florida state finalist in the 4x100m as a junior

**Personal:**

- » Born March 21, 2000
- » Son of Darren Issac and Raechel Brown
- » Twin brother, Chase, and one sister, Mya
- » Twin brother, Chase, played football at Western Michigan one season before transferring to Illinois in 2019
- » Father played in CFL for three seasons
- » Father played for the London Beefeaters of the Canadian Junior Football League from 1991-92
- » Mother was a figure skater
- » Picked Illinois because, "I personally choose to attend the University of Illinois because of how much the University had to offer as a student and as an athlete. From all the schools that I had visited before coming to visit Illinois, none of them could compete with how special the University is itself."
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 13 at Michigan St. 11/09/19  
 Sacks: 1 at Minnesota 11/06/21  
 Tackles For Loss: 1.5 at Minnesota 11/06/21  
 Interceptions: 2 at Michigan St. 11/09/19

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2019	ILL	10	25	30	55	2-4	5	0	0	0	0	1
2020	ILL	11	51	37	88	2.5-3	1	0	0	0	0	3
2021	ILL	6	20	16	36	0.5-2	0	1	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		39	146	114	260	6.5-15	9	3	0	0	1	4

## 52 VERDIS BROWN

DL, 6-4, 345, JR.

CHICAGO, ILL. / IMG ACADEMY (FLA.)

**2021 Sophomore:**

- » Played in eight games
- » Four tackles on the season
- » Switched from offensive line to defensive line

**2020 Sophomore:**

- » Started all eight games at right guard

**2019 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Played in all 13 games, primarily on special teams

**High School:**

- » Four-star recruit by ESPN and Rivals
- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 199 recruit in the nation by ESPN and No. 397 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 2 center in the nation by Rivals, No. 3 by ESPN and No. 7 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 36 recruit in Florida by Rivals, No. 54 by 247Sports and No. 65 by ESPN
- » 2017 Under Armour All-America Game invitation
- » Announced his commitment to Illinois on December 22, 2017
- » Offers included Florida State, Indiana, LSU, Michigan, Michigan State, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio State, Oklahoma, Purdue, Tennessee, UCF, UCLA and Wisconsin

**Personal:**

- » Born Jan. 12, 2000
- » Majoring in African-American studies

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 2 at Iowa 11/20/21

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2019	ILL	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2020	ILL	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2021	ILL	8	0	4	4	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		29	0	4	4	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 90 ALEC BRYANT

OLB, 6-3, 240, R-FR.

PEARLAND, TEXAS / SHADOW CREEK / VIRGINIA TECH

**2021 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Transferred from Virginia Tech with four years of eligibility remaining
- » Sat out due to NCAA transfer rules

**2020 Freshman (Virginia Tech):**

- » Played in one game against Virginia 12/12/20

**High School:**

- » Team won the Texas 5A state championship in football in 2019
- » Ranked as the No. 13 weakside defensive end in the country by 247Sports
- » Earned first-team all-district honors as a junior
- » Team was the state runner-up in 2018, posting a 15-1 record
- » No. 10 in the Houston Chronicle's top 100 prospects in Texas
- » Played for head coach Brad Butler at Shadow Creek High School
- » Four-star rating from Rivals
- » 45 total tackles (31 solo), 16.0 TFL, 6.0 sacks, four forced fumbles

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2020	VT	1	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	0	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		1	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0

# 13 PAT BRYANT

WR, 6-3, 195, SO.  
JACKSONVILLE, FLA. / ATLANTIC COAST

## 2021 Freshman:

- » Six receptions for 98 yards on the season
- » Career-long 45-yard reception at Iowa 11/20/21
- » Became the 14th Illini in program history to start 3+ games at wide receiver as a true freshman
- » Career-high three receptions for 25 yards against Purdue 9/25/21
- » Made first career start at Purdue 9/25/21

## High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #146 (247), #149 (ESPN)
- » State ranks: #104 (247), #132 (ESPN)
- » 44 receptions for 942 yards and seven touchdowns as a senior
- » 45 receptions for 684 yards and 11 touchdowns as a junior
- » 128 receptions, 2261 receiving yards, and 23 touchdowns during his high school career
- » Committed to Illinois on June 14, 2020
- » Offers included Iowa, Indiana, Nebraska, Miami, Minnesota, Penn State, Florida State, Virginia and Virginia Tech

## Personal:

- » Born December 10, 2002
- » Father, Patrick Bryant Sr. is the Athletic Director at Police Athletic League of Jacksonville
- » Has two brothers and one sister
- » Brother, Brandon Harris, played linebacker at USF
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

## CAREER HIGHS

Receptions: 3 at Purdue 09/25/21  
Receiving Yards: 45 at Iowa 11/20/21  
Longest Reception: 45 at Iowa 11/20/21

## RECEIVING STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2021	ILL	10	6	98	0	45	0.6	16.3	9.8
TOTAL		10	6	98	0	45	0.6	16.3	9.8

# 20 NAIVYAN CARGILL

TE, 6-4, 230, FR.  
RIVIERA BEACH, FLA. / PALM BEACH GARDENS

## High School:

- » Played for head coach Tyrone Higgins at Palm Beach Gardens

## Personal:

- » Born February 3, 2004
- » Majoring in sports management

# 87 KODY CASE

WR, 5-10, 180, SR.  
LAKE CITY, IOWA / SOUTH CENTRAL CALHOUN / SOUTH DAKOTA

## South Dakota 2017-21:

- » 82 receptions for 1,157 yards and nine touchdowns in four seasons at South Dakota
- » South Dakota freshman record five receiving touchdowns in 2017
- » Tied a South Dakota single-game record with 11 catches and had a career-high 144 yards and two touchdowns in the season-opener against FCS No. 25 Montana 8/31/19
- » Did not play in a game during the four-game COVID season and had a medical redshirt in 2018

## High School:

- » Two-time all-state for South Central Calhoun
- » 2016 ELITE 24 all-state defensive back
- » Two-time District 7 Offensive MVP
- » 2016 team captain

- » Holds school records for points (354), all-purpose yards (5,060), receiving yards (2,205) and receiving touchdowns (32)
- » 120 receptions for 18.4 yards per catch
- » 142 rushing attempts for 1,432 yards and 18 touchdowns
- » 147 tackles and a school-record 13 interceptions
- » Iowa Shrine Bowl invite
- » Academic all-state
- » National Honor Society
- » Also a three-time all-conference basketball player and a track and field standout
- » Holds track school records in the 100 and in three relays

## Personal:

- » Son of Kari and Bryan Case
- » Majored in physical education at South Dakota

## CAREER HIGHS

Receptions: 11 vs Montana 08/31/19  
Receiving Yards: 144 vs Montana 08/31/19  
Receiving Touchdowns: 2 vs Indiana State, 10/14/17, vs Montana 08/31/19  
Longest Reception: 72 at Bowling Green 09/09/17

## RECEIVING STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2017	SDAK	12	25	430	5	72	2.1	17.2	35.8
2018	SDAK	4	17	163	0	17	4.3	9.6	40.8
2019	SDAK	6	28	396	3	44	4.7	14.1	66.0
2020	SDAK	1	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2021	SDAK	10	12	168	1	35	1.2	14.0	16.8
TOTAL		33	82	1,157	9	72	2.5	14.1	35.1

# 48 MIKE CERNIGLIA JR.

TE, 6-3, 240, SO.  
MADISON, WIS. / MEMORIAL / NORTHERN ILLINOIS

## 2021 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Academic All-Big Ten

## 2019 Freshman (Northern Illinois):

- » Redshirted the 2019 season
- » Did not play in a game

## High School:

- » Three-year letterwinner at Madison Memorial High School
- » Named team captain as a senior
- » All-city offensive selection at tight end as a junior and senior
- » Received team's Offensive MVP award as a senior.
- » Was also a letterwinner in basketball

## Personal:

- » Born Aug. 15, 2000
- » Son of Aleah and Mike Cerniglia
- » Father played hockey at Wisconsin and mother played volleyball at Wisconsin
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

# 49 SETH COLEMAN

DL, 6-5, 240, SO.  
MELBOURNE, FLA. / HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL ACADEMY

## 2021 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Played in 10 games with three starts
- » 22 tackles, 3.0 TFLs, 2.0 sacks, two pass breakups, one fumble recovery, and one forced fumble on the season
- » Pass breakup that led to Tarique Barnes interception in Illinois' road win over No. 20 Minnesota
- » Four tackles and 1.0 sack against Charlotte 10/2/21
- » Six tackles, 1.0 TFLs, one forced fumble, and one PBU against Maryland 9/17/21
- » First career sack against Nebraska 8/28/21

## 2020 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Played in all eight games and started four at defensive end
- » 13 tackles and 3.5 TFLs on the season
- » First career start at Nebraska 11/21/20

## 2019 Freshman:

- » Played in three games and redshirted the season
- » Made Illinois debut against Nebraska

## High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and ESPN
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Ranked No. 110 weak side DE in nation by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 74 outside linebacker in the nation by ESPN
- » Ranked No. 135 recruit in Florida by ESPN and No. 265 by 247Sports
- » 101 tackles, 28.0 TFL and 13.0 sacks as a senior
- » Played for coach Nate Hooks at Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy
- » Also played basketball at Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy
- » Verbally committed to Illinois in July 2018
- » Offers included Baylor, Navy, Nebraska, Pitt, Rutgers, South Florida, TCU, Utah, and Virginia

## Personal:

- » Born Dec. 7, 2000
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

## CAREER HIGHS

Tackles: 13 at Michigan St. 11/09/19  
Sacks: 1 at Minnesota 11/06/21  
Tackles For Loss: 1.5 at Minnesota 11/06/21  
Interceptions: 2 at Michigan St. 11/09/19

## DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2019	ILL	3	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	ILL	8	7	6	13	3.5-8	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	10	13	9	22	3-14	2	1	1	0	2	0
TOTAL		21	20	15	35	6.5-22	2	1	1	0	2	0

# 40 SHAMMOND COOPER

OLB, 6-2, 220, SO.  
ST. LOUIS, MO. / TRINITY CATHOLIC

## 2021 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Played in three games

## 2020 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Played in four games
- » Three tackles and 0.5 TFL in the season

## 2019 Freshman:

- » Played in three games and redshirted the season
- » Five tackles on the season
- » Made Illinois debut in the season opener against Akron

## High School:

- » Four-star recruit by 247Sports and ESPN
- » Three-star recruit by Rivals
- » Ranked No. 149 recruit in the nation by ESPN and No. 531 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 26 inside LB in the nation by 247Sports and No. 30 by Rivals
- » Ranked No. 13 outside linebacker in the nation by ESPN
- » Ranked No. 4 recruit in Missouri by ESPN and No. 10 by 247Sports and Rivals
- » Ranked as high as No. 128 overall recruit in the nation in May 2017 according to 247Sports Composite
- » 2019 Under Armour All-American Game
- » 2018 St. Louis Post-Dispatch Defensive Player of the Year
- » 2018 USA TODAY All-USA Missouri first team
- » 2018 Missouri Football Coaches Association Class 3 All-State first team
- » 2018 The Opening Finals participant
- » 137 tackles, 16.0 TFL and 5.0 sacks as a senior
- » Led Trinity Catholic to Missouri Class 3 state title as a senior
- » Led Trinity Catholic with 8.0 tackles in 2018 Missouri Class 4 state title game to help Trinity Catholic beat Cardinal Ritter
- » Led Trinity Catholic in tackles for four years
- » Played for coach Cory Patterson through junior year when Patterson left Trinity Catholic to become TE coach at Illinois

- » Played for coach Terrence Curry at Trinity Catholic as a senior
- » High school teammate of fellow Illinois signee Isaiah Williams
- » Offers included Arkansas, Auburn, Clemson, Florida, Florida State, Indiana, Iowa, Iowa State, Kansas State, Kentucky, Louisville, LSU, Michigan State, Minnesota, Nebraska, Notre Dame, Ohio State, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Ole Miss, Oregon, Oregon State, South Carolina, Syracuse, Tennessee, Texas, Texas A&M, and Wisconsin

**Personal:**

- » Born March 15, 2001
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 5 vs Akron 08/31/19

Tackles For Loss: 0.5 at Wisconsin 10/23/20

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2019	ILL	3	2	3	5	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	ILL	4	2	1	3	0.5-1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	3	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		10	4	4	8	0.5-1	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 95 NICO CRAWFORD

**LS, 6-1, 250, FR.****DUBLIN, OHIO / DUBLIN SCIOTO****High School:**

- » Played for head coach Karl Johnson at Dublin Scioto
- » Lettered two years in football

**Personal:**

- » Born June 12, 2003
- » Son of Mike and Lillian Crawford
- » One brother, Alex, and one sister, Victoria
- » Majoring in kinesiology

## 72 ZY CRISLER

**OL, 6-6, 330, SO.****CRYSTAL SPRINGS, MISS. / COPIAH / MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST CC****2021 Freshman (Mississippi Gulf Coast CC):**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, and Rivals
- » Juco national ranks: #16 (Rivals), #44 (247), #50 (ESPN)
- » Juco position ranks: #3 (247), #6 (ESPN)
- » 2021 All-MACCC second team

**High School:**

- » Played for head coach Billy Hankins at Copiah
- » 2020 Class 5A All-MAIS first team offensive lineman
- » 2020 MAIS All-Star Game selection

## 70 TOMMY CRONIN

**OL, 6-4, 310, SO.****OAK PARK, ILL. / OAK PARK RIVER FOREST****2021 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Played in five games

**2020 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game

**2019 Freshman:**

- » Redshirted the 2019 season

**High School:**

- » Lettered in football as a senior
- » Played for head coach John Hoerster at Oak Park River Forest
- » Also played baseball and golf in high school
- » Did not start playing football until senior year

**Personal:**

- » Born May 25, 2001
- » Son of Regan and Thomas Cronin

- » Eight sisters, Caroline, Anne-Claire, Jilly, Tamsen, Rory, Regan Mary, Tess, Eileen, and one brother, Marshall
- » Picked Illinois because, "I connected with the coaching staff right away, Illinois is my home town state, I have family here, and I love the colors orange and blue."
- » Plans to own his own business or become a lawyer following his playing career
- » Majoring in history

## 1 KIONTE CURRY

**DB, 6-0, 200, R-FR.****MIMS, FLA. / COCOA HIGH SCHOOL****2021 Freshman:**

- » Redshirted the season

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and Rivals
- » 32 tackles, one interception and 10 pass deflections during his senior season
- » Committed to Illinois February 23, 2021
- » Offers included Cincinnati, Iowa State, Kentucky, Nebraska, Rutgers, Washington State and West Virginia

**Personal:**

- » Born December 4, 2001
- » Majoring in general studies

## 38 ISAAC DARKANGELO

**LB, 6-1, 230, SR.****BRIGHTON, MICH. / DETROIT CATHOLIC CENTRAL****2021 Junior:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Played in all 12 games
- » Seven tackles on the season
- » #9 special teams grade in the Big Ten among players with 50+ coverage snaps, according to PFF (77.8).

**2020 Junior:**

- » Did not play in a game
- » Transferred from Division II Northern Michigan

**2019 Sophomore (Northern Michigan):**

- » Northern Michigan's Athlete of the Year
- » All-GLIAC Football Second Team
- » 105 tackles in 10 games, ranking second in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

**2018 Freshman (Northern Michigan):**

- » 60 tackles in 10 games as a true freshman

**High School:**

- » Named First team All-State 2016
- » First team All Catholic league in 2016 and 2017
- » Team captain in 2017
- » Three time district champion
- » State-runner up 2016
- » Also played golf, lacrosse and wrestling

**Personal:**

- » Born April 26, 2000
- » Son of Anthony and JoAnn
- » Majoring in communication
- » Has two brothers and three sisters
- » Brother, Anthony, played college football at Ferris State for four years, then professionally in Germany
- » Sister, Shiann, is a professional women's hockey player who is a world champion with Team USA (2016)
- » Mother, JoAnn, is a national champion in college volleyball
- » Chose to wear 38 because "my older brother, Anthony Darkangelo II, has always been 38. I've always looked up to him and he is someone that inspires me."

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 4 at Iowa 11/20/21

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2018	NMU	10	31	29	60	7.5-30	0	1	0	0	2	0
2019	NMU	10	54	51	105	8.5-25	0	0	1	0	2	0
2021	ILL	12	4	3	7	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ILL TOTAL		12	4	3	7	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		32	89	83	172	16-55	0	1	1	0	4	0

## 74 DYLAN DAVIS

**OL, 6-4, 300, SO.****SARASOTA, FLA. / ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL / FURMAN****2021 Freshman (Furman):**

- » Phil Steele FCS Freshman All-America first team
- » All-conference first team
- » Played in two games during the COVID season in 2020, then 11 games in 2021 as a freshman

**High School:**

- » Played for head coach Tod Creneti at Saint Stephens Episcopal
- » Lettered four years in football
- » Two-year captain
- » Two-time all-state on defense and one-time all-state on offense
- » Three-time all-area first team
- » Made 44 starts in four years, helping Saint Stephens Episcopal to a 40-4 record
- » Helped lead St. Stephen's to state championships in 2016 and 2017
- » 150 tackles, including 60 for loss, and 18 sacks in his career
- » Played in the Blue-Grey All-Star Game and Florida North vs. South Senior Bowl
- » Honor Roll
- » Also competed in basketball, track, and wrestling
- » Won district and region championships and finished third in the state in the shotput in 2019

**Personal:**

- » Born March 15, 2001
- » Son of Nathan and Meghan Davis
- » Two brothers, Brody and Connor, and one sister, Evan
- » Majoring in history

## 3 TOMMY DEVITO

**QB, 6-2, 210, SR.****CEDAR GROVE, N.J. / DON BOSCO PREP / SYRACUSE****Syracuse (2017-21):**

- » Stepped into the starting role as a sophomore in 2019
- » Missed most of the 2020 season due to injury
- » As a freshman in 2018, served as the second-string quarterback and led the Orange to critical wins over Florida State and North Carolina
- » Played in 24 games with 15 starts over three seasons
- » Completed 305-of-520 (.586) passes for 3,478 yards and 27 touchdowns with 10 interceptions, while rushing for 128 yards and three scores
- » 3,606 career yards of total offense and 26 touchdowns responsible for
- » Ranked in the top 10 all-time at Syracuse in completion percentage (7th, 58.6), passer rating (8th, 128.1), passing yards per game (7th, 144.9), touchdown passes (7th, 27), completions (9th, 305) and passing yards (10th, 3,478)
- » Two career 300-yard passing games
- » Five career games with 3+ touchdown passes
- » Streak of 212 pass attempts without an interception from 2019 through the first two games of 2020, the longest streak in Syracuse history
- » 2019 All-ACC Academic Team

**High School:**

- » Two-year starter for head coach Greg Toal
- » No. 136 in the ESPN 300
- » Ranked eighth nationally by ESPN among pocket passers
- » No. 8 pro-style quarterback in the Class of 2017, according to 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 14 among pro-style quarterbacks by Rivals
- » No. 39 overall quarterback in the class, according to Scout
- » Starter for Team Highlight at the 2017 Under Armour All-America Game
- » Nike Football Elite 11 finalist and named to The Opening Finals 7-on-7 All-Tournament Team
- » Two-time NJ.com All-State selection, including first-team honors in 2015
- » Named to the 2016 American Family Insurance All-USA New Jersey Second Team by USA Today
- » 2015 MSG Varsity All-Metro First Team Offense
- » PrepStar All-East Region selection
- » As a junior, led the Ironmen to a 9-3 record and the 2015 New Jersey Non-Public 4 state title
- » As a senior captain, passed for 2,005 yards and 16 touchdowns
- » Threw for 3,800 yards and 35 TDs in his career
- » Team MVP

**Personal:**

- » Born on August 7, 1998 in Livingston, New Jersey
- » Son of Alexandra and Tom DeVito
- » One brother
- » Majored in sociology at Syracuse

**CAREER HIGHS**

Rushing Attempts: 16 vs Boston College 11/02/19, at North Carolina 09/12/20  
 Rushing Yards: 85 vs Western Michigan 09/21/19  
 Longest Rush: 60 vs Western Michigan 09/21/19  
 Passing Attempts: 39 at NC State 10/10/19, at Maryland 09/07/19  
 Completions: 29 at NC State 10/10/19  
 Passing Yards: 330 at Maryland 09/07/19  
 Passing Touchdowns: 4 vs Western Michigan 09/21/19, vs Holy Cross 09/28/19  
 Longest Pass: 85 vs Boston College 11/02/19

**PASSING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	COMP	ATT	INT	YDS	TD	LG	PCT	AVG/P	AVG/G	EFF
2018	SYR	8	44	87	3	525	4	50	50.6	6.0	65.6	109.5
2019	SYR	12	213	337	5	2,360	19	85	63.2	7.0	196.7	137.7
2020	SYR	4	48	96	2	593	4	79	50.0	6.2	148.3	111.5
2021	SYR	3	32	52	2	388	1	73	61.5	7.5	129.3	122.9
TOTAL		27	337	572	12	3,866	28	85	58.9	6.8	143.2	127.7

**RUSHING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	ATT	YDS	TD	LG	AVG/C	AVG/G
2018	SYR	8	23	-17	1	13	-0.7	-2.1
2019	SYR	12	112	122	2	60	1.1	10.2
2020	SYR	4	43	23	0	19	0.5	5.8
2021	SYR	3	21	90	1	20	4.3	30.0
TOTAL		27	199	218	4	60	1.1	8.1

## 81 DANIEL EDWARDS

WR, 5-11, 160, FR.

WINTER PARK, FLA. / WINTER PARK

**2021 Freshman:**

- » Redshirted the season

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #68 (ESPN), #108 (247)
- » State ranks: #124 (ESPN), #144 (247)
- » 40 tackles, four interceptions, 89 interception return yards, one forced fumble, one fumble recovery and 21 pass deflections as a sophomore
- » Competed in track and field in high school, finishing fifth at the 2019 state championships in the 4x100
- » Committed to Illinois on May 21, 2020
- » Offers included Auburn, Louisville, Miami, Ole Miss, and Florida State

**Personal:**

- » Born January 16, 2002
- » Chose Illinois because, "it felt like it's the best way to get me

- to my goal."
- » Majoring in general studies

## 23 TERAH EDWARDS

DL, 6-2, 320, R-FR.

GROVEPORT, OHIO / GROVEPORT MADISON / NORTHWESTERN

**2021 Freshman (Northwestern):**

- » Played in three games and redshirted the season
- » One tackle against Indiana State 9/11/21

**2020 Freshman (Northwestern):**

- » Made college debut against Wisconsin 11/21/20
- » One tackle against Illinois 12/12/20
- » Played two games as a true freshman

**High School:**

- » Three-star prospect and the 28th-ranked player in Ohio by 247sports
- » Three-year letter winner and 2019 team captain
- » 53 tackles, 7.5 tackles for loss and 4.5 sacks to earn First-Team All-OCC, All-District, All-Metro, D1-All-State and All-Ohio honors as a senior
- » Named a Super-25 Finalist as a senior
- » All-OCC first team as a junior
- » All-District second team and All-Metro special mention as a junior after finishing with 30 tackles, three tackles for loss and two sacks
- » Led Groveport to a 10-3 record, OCC Championship and Regional runner up finish
- » Lettered twice in wrestling, earning a pair of OCC titles
- » Earned Honor Roll distinction all four years of high school
- » Competed against fellow Wildcats signee Ben Wrather
- » Offers included Indiana, Iowa State, Michigan, Michigan State, Minnesota, Missouri, Penn State, Pittsburgh, Purdue, Rutgers, Tennessee and Vanderbilt

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 1 vs Illinois 12/12/20, vs Indiana St. 09/11/21

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2020	NW	2	1	0	1	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	NW	4	1	0	1	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		6	2	0	2	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 79 LUCIANO ELIAS

OL, 6-5, 320, FR.

WILMETTE, ILL. / NEW TRIER

**High School:**

- » Played for head coach Brian Doll at New Trier
- » 2021 and 2022 all-conference
- » Team captain in 2022
- » Honor Roll

**Personal:**

- » Born October 1, 2003
- » Son of Rafael and Josephine Elias
- » Two brothers, Leo and Max
- » Chose Illinois because, "It has great academics and I felt really comfortable with all the coaching staff."

## 41 PRESTON ENGEL

LS, 6-0, 250, JR.

NORMAL, ILL. / NORMAL COMMUNITY

**2021 Sophomore:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Missed the season with an injury
- » Switched to tight end during 2021 spring practices

**2020 Sophomore:**

- » Played on special teams and as a jumbo package fullback/tight end

**2019 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Played in two games, primarily as an extra blocker
- » Made Illinois debut against Rutgers

**2018 Freshman:**

- » Redshirted the season

**High School:**

- » Three-year letterwinner in football
- » Played for head coach Wes Temples at Normal Community
- » 2018 All-Big 12 Conference first team
- » 2018 senior captain
- » Also played basketball as a freshman and sophomore

**Personal:**

- » Born March 14, 2000
- » Son of Melissa and Greg Engel
- » Father played center at Illinois from 1989-94 and was captain of the 1993 team before playing in the NFL
- » Mother is the Director of Internal Operations for Advancement at the University of Illinois
- » Picked Illinois because, "It is the school I've always been a fan of. It also has a lot more to offer than just a great football program, the academics here are outstanding as well."
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

## 24 NICK FEDANZO

RB, 6-0, 210, R-FR.

LOMBARD, ILL. / MONTINI CATHOLIC

**2021 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game

**2020 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Played in seven games, primarily on special teams

**2019 Freshman:**

- » Played in three games and redshirted the season
- » Made Illinois debut against Eastern Michigan

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and ESPN
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Ranked No. 81 running back in the nation by 247Sports and No. 97 by ESPN
- » Ranked No. 25 recruit in Illinois by ESPN and No. 28 by 247Sports
- » Played for head coach Mike Bukovsky at Montini
- » 2018 USA TODAY All-USA Illinois second team
- » 2018 Class 5A IHSA All-State
- » Led Montini to an IHSA 5A state runner-up finish as a senior at Memorial Stadium
- » 17 carries for 186 yards and three touchdowns in the 2018 state championship game against Joliet Catholic
- » Also ran track in high school

**Personal:**

- » Born Nov. 13, 2000
- » Son of Natalie and Joe Fedanzo
- » One brother, Michael, and one sister, Danielle
- » Nicknamed "Zo"
- » Picked Illinois because of, "the family atmosphere."
- » Majoring in communication

## 82 LUKE FORD

**TE, 6-6, 265, SR.****CARTERVILLE, ILL. / CARTERVILLE / GEORGIA****2021 Junior:**

- » Started all 12 games at tight end
- » 15 receptions for 114 receiving yards and two touchdowns on the season
- » Fifth on the team in receptions (15)
- » Career highs in receptions (3) and receiving yards (30) and scored his first career touchdown against Nebraska 8/28/21

**2020 Junior:**

- » Played in eight games and started two at tight end
- » Two catches for 15 yards on the season
- » First career start at Northwestern 12/12/20
- » Made Illinois debut at Wisconsin 10/23/20

**2019 Sophomore:**

- » Sat out 2019 season due to NCAA transfer rules after hardship waiver request was denied
- » Enrolled at Illinois for spring 2019 semester and participated in 2019 spring practices

**2018 Freshman (Georgia):**

- » Played in nine of 14 games for the Bulldogs
- » One reception for four yards in collegiate debut against Austin Peay 9/1/18

**High School:**

- » Four-star recruit by 247Sports, Rivals and ESPN
- » Ranked No. 42 recruit in the nation in the class of 2018 by Rivals, No. 51 by 247Sports and No. 63 by ESPN
- » Ranked No. 1 tight end in the nation by Rivals and No. 3 by 247Sports and ESPN
- » Ranked No. 1 recruit in Illinois by 247Sports, Rivals and ESPN
- » 2018 U.S. Army All-America Bowl
- » The Opening 2017 Finals
- » PrepStar Magazine Top 150 Dream Team
- » 2017 Illinois High School Football Coaches Association All-State honorable mention
- » 2017 MaxPreps Preseason Medium School All-America First Team offense
- » Two-time News-Gazette All-State Special Mention 100
- » Played for head coach Dennis Drust at Cartersville
- » Also played basketball in high school, helping Cartersville to the IHSA Regional Finals each of the last three seasons
- » Also competed in the long jump and 200 meters for the Cartersville track and field team
- » Offers included Alabama, Arkansas, Auburn, Baylor, Florida, Florida State, Illinois, Iowa, Louisville, LSU, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, NC State, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Oregon, Pitt, Rutgers, Syracuse, Tennessee, Texas, Texas A&M, and West Virginia

**Personal:**

- » Born Sept. 27, 1999
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

**CAREER HIGHS**

Receptions: 3 vs Nebraska 08/28/21, vs Charlotte 10/02/21, at Iowa 11/20/21  
 Receiving Yards: 30 vs Nebraska 08/28/21  
 Receiving Touchdowns: 1 vs Nebraska 08/28/21, at Iowa 11/20/21  
 Longest Reception: 19 vs Nebraska 08/28/21

**RECEIVING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2019	UGA	9	1	4	0	4	0.1	4.0	0.4
2020	ILL	8	2	15	0	11	0.3	7.5	1.9
2021	ILL	12	15	114	2	19	1.3	7.6	9.5
ILL TOTAL		20	17	129	2	19	0.9	7.6	6.5
TOTAL		29	18	133	2	19	0.6	7.4	4.6

## 58 MATT FRIES

**OL, 6-5, 275, FR.****CRANFORD, N.J. / CRANFORD****High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #47 (On3), #77 (ESPN), #118 (247)
- » State ranks: #13 (On3), #17 (ESPN), #19 (247), #24 (Rivals)
- » Played for head coach Erik Rosenmeier at Cranford
- » Led Cranford to the 2021 NJSIAA High School state championship
- » Three-year letterwinner
- » 2021 NJ.com All-State
- » 2020 and 2021 all-conference
- » 2020 and 2021 JSZ All-Zone Public Offense
- » Also played lacrosse for four years and basketball for two years in high school
- » Offers included Akron, Arizona, Arizona State, Army, Buffalo, Central Florida, Charlotte, Coastal Carolina, Connecticut, Indiana, East Carolina, Massachusetts, Miami (Ohio), Syracuse, Temple, Toledo, Wake Forest, and West Virginia

**Personal:**

- » Born December 22, 2003
- » Son of Harold and Maureen Fries
- » One brother, Will, and two sisters, Mallory and Kristen
- » Brother, Will, is a guard for the Indianapolis Colts
- » Chose Illinois because, "I believe the University of Illinois will best allow me to grow as a football player and a man during my time there."
- » Plans to major in business
- » Aspires to go to culinary school following his playing career

## 73 JOSH GESKY

**OL, 6-5, 325, R-FR.****MANTENO, ILL. / MANTENO****2021 Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game and redshirted the season

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #163 (ESPN), #207 (247Sports)
- » State Rank: #32 (Rivals), #48 (ESPN), #59 (247)
- » Two-time Academic All-State
- » Two-time Interstate 8 All-Conference team
- » All-Area
- » All-Conference in track and field as a junior and senior
- » Committed to Illinois on August 9, 2020
- » Offers included Eastern Illinois, Eastern Michigan, Southern Illinois, and Syracuse

**Personal:**

- » Born Dec. 31, 2002
- » Chose Illinois because, "It is a close Big Ten school and it has amazing academics."
- » Majoring in general studies

## 15 PRINCE GREEN

**DB, 6-3, 215, R-FR.****GRIFFIN, GA. / GRIFFIN****2021 Freshman:**

- » Redshirted the season

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, and Rivals
- » Position ranks (wide receiver): #203 (ESPN), #234 (247)
- » State ranks: #130 (247), #133 (ESPN)
- » All-Region first team
- » All-state

- » Voted team offensive and defensive MVP
- » 17 receptions, 324 reception yards, four receiving touchdowns, 33 tackles, 2.0 TFLs, one fumble recovery returned for a touchdown, and six interceptions with one returned for a touchdown as a senior
- » Committed to Illinois on May 3, 2020
- » Offers included Akron, Coastal Carolina, Kentucky, Liberty, Minnesota, and Purdue
- » Also played basketball, baseball, track and field
- » Had perfect attendance
- » Earned the Senior Spotlight Award

**Personal:**

- » Born May 2, 2003
- » Has three brothers, Tony, Jamond and Zion
- » Has a younger sister, Daisy
- » Chose Illinois because, "Not only do I get the opportunity to play for and with some great coaches and teammates in an amazing state-of-the-art facility but I also get to get a top-ranked education from a prestigious university with the country's best professors."
- » Wants to develop his own film and graphic design company
- » Majoring in general studies

## 5 CALEB GRIFFIN

**K, 6-3, 215, JR.****DANVILLE, ILL. / DANVILLE****2021 Sophomore:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Played in two games
- » Played kicker and wide receiver during 2021 spring practices
- » Illinois' SAAC President

**2020 Sophomore:**

- » Played in four games and started two at kicker
- » Big Ten Distinguished Scholar
- » 1-1 on field goals and 5-5 for extra point attempts on the season
- » Made first career start and went 1-1 on field goals and 3-3 on PATs against Purdue 10/31/20
- » Primary punt returner against Iowa 12/5/20
- » University of Illinois Student-Athlete Advisory Committee Vice President

**2019 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Backup kicker, did not kick in a game

**2018 Freshman:**

- » Redshirted the 2018 season (Did not play)

**High School:**

- » Lettered four years in football in high school
- » Played for head coach Marcus Forrest at Danville
- » Three-time All-Big 12 PK
- » Four-time Commercial News All-Area
- » Two-time News-Gazette All-Area first team
- » Kohl's Kicking Player of the Week 10/23/17
- » 2017 all-state honorable mention
- » Four-sport athlete at Danville (football, baseball, basketball, soccer)
- » Four-year letterwinner in baseball
- » Four-year letterwinner in soccer
- » Three-year letterwinner in basketball
- » Three-time All-Big 12 in baseball
- » Two-time all-state in soccer
- » Two-time all-area in basketball

**Personal**

- » Born Oct. 20, 1999
- » Son of Chris and Erin Griffin
- » Older brother, Cameron, and younger sister, Kedzie
- » Brother played soccer at Quincy University for one year

- » Father played soccer at Illinois College for two years
- » Chose No. 38 because his home is 38 miles from Memorial Stadium
- » Chose Illinois because, "The relationship I was able to build with all of the coaches."
- » Plans to work in sports following his playing career
- » Graduated with a degree in marketing
- » Enrolled in the management master's program

**CAREER HIGHS**

Points: 6 vs Purdue 10/31/20  
 PATs Made: 3 vs Purdue 10/31/20  
 Field goals made: 1 vs Purdue 10/31/20  
 Longest field goal: 28 vs Purdue 10/31/20  
 All-purpose yards: 4 vs Iowa 12/5/20  
 Punt returns: 1 vs Iowa 12/5/20  
 Punt return yards: 4 vs Iowa 12/5/20  
 Long punt return: 4 vs Iowa 12/5/20

**KICKING STATISTICS**

YEAR	PAT	FG	0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	PTS	LG
2018	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
2019	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
2020	3-3	1-1	1-1	0-0	0-0	0-0	6	28
TOTAL	3-3	1-1	1-1	0-0	0-0	0-0	6	28

**KICKOFF STATISTICS**

YEAR	G	KO	YDS	AVG.	TB	TB%	OB	ONSIDE
2018	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	2	8	503	62.9	5	63%	1	0
TOTAL	2	8	503	62.9	5	63%	1	0

**PUNT RETURN STATISTICS**

YEAR	G	NO.	YDS	TD	LG	AVG/R	AVG/G
2020	3	1	4	0	4	4.0	1.3
TOTAL	3	1	4	0	4	4.0	1.3

## 35 GRAYSON GRIFFIN

DB, 5-11, 180, FR.

AURORA, ILL. / ST. FRANCIS

**High School:**

- » Played for head coach Bob McMillen at St. Francis
- » Three-year letterwinner
- » 2019 All-DVC/Metro Suburban Conference first team and all-area
- » 2018 All-DVC/Metro Suburban Conference second team
- » 2019 Academic All-State Team 8A
- » 2018 and 2019 academic all-conference

**Personal:**

- » Born April 25, 2003
- » Son of Ron and Carla Griffin
- » One brother, Greer Griffin
- » Father, Ron Griffin, played college football for four years
- » Mother, Carla Griffin, played junior college basketball for two years
- » Chose Illinois because, "It has been a life-long dream of mine to attend the University of Illinois. I have always been a believer of staying home and playing in my home state. This school has outstanding academics and athletics that competes with the best."
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

## 29 TJ GRIFFIN

DB, 6-0, 200, FR.

HICKORY HILLS, ILL. / AMOS ALONZO STAGG

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and On3, two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Position ranks: #128 (247)
- » State ranks: #37 (247)
- » Played for head coach Colt Nero at Amos Alonzo Stagg
- » Two-year letterwinner
- » 2021 Illinois High School Football Coaches Association 8A All-State first team

- » Stagg record holder for season receiving yards and career receiving yards
- » 2021 All-State Academic Team
- » NFF Scholar-Athlete Award
- » Student Council
- » Played three seasons of varsity basketball
- » Also played volleyball as a freshman
- » Student Council member
- » Moraine Valley Business Skills Competition third-place finisher

**Personal:**

- » Born March 8, 2004
- » Son of Timothy Griffin and Kimberly McGraw
- » Mother played college basketball at Moraine Valley Community College
- » One brother and one sister on his mother's side, Jaiden and McKenzie, and two brothers and one sister on his father's side, Justice, Gavin, and Mia
- » Chose Illinois because, "Illinois is my home. They were the only school who reached out to me and the only school I would want to have reached out to me. There's nothing better than being with people who see and work for the best in you and that is exactly what Illinois is all about. Getting the best out of me and turning me into the man I wish to be."
- » Plans to major in electrical engineering

## 53 DEVIN HALE

OL, 6-0, 310, R-FR.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL. / SACRED HEART-GRIFFIN

**2021 Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game and redshirted the season

**High School:**

- » 2021 all-conference
- » 2021 academic all-conference
- » 2021 all-area first team
- » 2021 5A All-State first team offense
- » Played in the Illinois Shriners All-Star Game
- » 2019 All-Conference honorable mention
- » Also competed in track and field where he was a sectional champion and state qualifier for discus and shot put

**Personal:**

- » Born September 11, 2002
- » Son of Dennis and Melisa Hale
- » One brother, Zack, and two sisters, Lyndsay and Miyah
- » Chose Illinois because, "I knew it was the right place for me, with the university being in-state I'm not too far from home, and it's always been a huge dream of mine to play for Illinois. Also I know that the Illinois has top-tier athletic facilities and academic programs that can compete with anybody in the country."
- » Majoring in general studies

## 39 AIDAN HALL

LS, 6-2, 205, SO.

GLEN ELLYN, ILL. / BENET ACADEMY

**2021 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Did not play in a game

**2020 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Played in two games at long snapper
- » Made Illinios debut at Northwestern 12/12/20

**2019 Freshman:**

- » Redshirted the 2019 season

**High School:**

- » Played for head coach Pat New at Benet Academy
- » Two-year letterwinner

- » 2018 Benet Special Teams MVP
- » Graduated with Honors
- » Honor Roll all eight semesters

**Personal:**

- » Born Oct. 27, 2000
- » Son of Brian and Patty Hall
- » Two brothers, Colin and Brogan
- » Majoring in systems engineering and design
- » Picked Illinois because, "I had the opportunity to study engineering at a top-tier university while participating in Big Ten athletics."

## 36 LANE HANSEN

LS, 6-0, 220, FR.

EAST LAKE, FLA. / EAST LAKE HIGH SCHOOL

**2021 Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game and redshirted the season

**High School:**

- » Captain of his varsity team for three years

**Personal:**

- » Born September 9, 2002
- » Son of Shad and Lori Hansen
- » Brother, Jake, played linebacker at Illinois from 2016-21
- » Father, Shad Hansen, played football at BYU from 1989-92 and is the school's all-time leading tackler (408)
- » Majoring in kinesiology

## 5 CALVIN HART JR.

LB, 6-1, 230, JR.

FORT LAUDERDALE, FLA. / AMERICAN HERITAGE / NC STATE

**2022 Junior:**

- » Athlon Preseason All-Big Ten fourth team

**2021 Sophomore:**

- » Bednarik Award National Player of the Week and Big Ten Defensive Player of the Week 9/1/21 following 1.5 TFLs and a 41-yard fumble return touchdown against Nebraska 8/28/21
- » Illinois team defensive MVP against Nebraska 8/28/21
- » Injured in the season opener and missed the rest of the season

**2020 Sophomore (North Carolina State):**

- » Played in 10 games
- » 18 tackles, two sacks, 3.0 TFLs, two forced fumbles on the season

**2019 Redshirt Freshman (North Carolina State):**

- » Played in 10 games
- » Missed one game with an injury
- » 35 tackles, one sack, 5.5 TFLs, one fumble recovery on the season
- » Seven tackles, including 1.5 TFL, in his first career start vs. #5 Clemson 11/9/19
- » Tied career-high seven tackles vs. UNC 11/30/19

**2018 Freshman (North Carolina State):**

- » Played in four games on special teams

**High School:**

- » Three star recruit by ESPN, 247, and 247 Composite
- » Position ranks: #68 (ESPN), #86 (247), #99 (247Composite)
- » State ranks: #176 (ESPN), #182 (247), #243 (247Composite)
- » Played linebacker and safety at American Heritage High School for coach and former Pro Bowler Pat Surtain
- » Helped team win Florida 5A state title as a both a junior and senior
- » School finished as No. 3 ranked team nationally going 13-0 Hart's senior season, and winning 27 games overall during his career

- » 191 tackles, 88 solo stops, 17 tackles for loss, and 10 sacks during his high school career
- » 92 tackles, 10 tackles for loss and four sacks his senior season
- » 70 tackles, seven TFLs and four sacks his junior season
- » Named first-team All-Broward County by the Miami Herald
- » Also competed in track and field

**Personal:**

- » Born Sept. 20, 1999
- » Son of Calvin Hart Sr. and Felicia Hart
- » Two sisters, Chasity and Ciara
- » Owns his own clothing business called "One of the Few" (instagram: \_oneofthefew)
- » Wants to continue his own business after his playing career
- » Majoring in general studies

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 7 vs Clemson 11/09/19, vs North Carolina 11/30/19  
 Sacks: 1 4 times  
 Tackles For Loss: 1.5 at FSU 09/28/19, vs Clemson 11/09/19, vs Nebraska 08/28/21

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2018	NCST	4	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019	NCST	11	18	17	35	5.5-29	0	0	1	0	1	0
2020	NCST	10	6	12	18	3-13	0	2	0	0	2	0
2021	ILL	1	2	4	6	1.5-8	0	0	1	0	1	0
ILL TOTAL		1	2	4	6	1.5-8	0	0	1	0	1	0
TOTAL		26	26	33	59	10-50	0	2	2	0	4	0

## 22 CHASE HAYDEN

RB, 5-10, 205, SR.

MEMPHIS, TENN./ST. GEORGE'S INDEPENDENT/ARKANSAS/ECU

**2021 Junior:**

- » Five carries for 18 yards in six games played on the season

**2020 Junior (East Carolina):**

- » Played in three games
- » 16 carries for 62 rushing yards on the season
- » One reception for 31 yards on the season

**2019 Junior (Arkansas):**

- » Played in four games and redshirted the season
- » Four receptions for 12 yards on the season
- » Reception in each of the first three games, including two for 12 yards against Colorado State 9/14/19
- » Earned 79.5 in pass blocking on the season from Pro Football Focus

**2018 Sophomore (Arkansas):**

- » Played in all 12 games
- » Ranked third on the team in rushing (251 yards)
- » 11 receptions for 61 yards on the season
- » Recorded 55 yards on 11 carries at Colorado State 9/8/18
- » Season-high 12 carries for 30 yards against Ole Miss 10/13/18
- » Season-high 70 yards on five carries vs. Vanderbilt 10/27/18
- » Season high five receptions for 17 yards vs. Vanderbilt 10/27/18
- » Season-high 26 yards on two catches vs. Alabama 10/6/18

**2017 Freshman (Arkansas):**

- » Played seven games
- » 49 carries for 249 yards and three touchdowns on the season
- » Averaged 5.3 yards per carry on the season
- » 14 carries for 120 yards his collegiate debut against Florida A&M 8/31/17
- » Earned SEC Freshman of the Week after game against Florida A&M 8/31/17
- » Became one of only three Arkansas true freshmen to rush for 100 yards or more in his Razorback debut, joining former standouts Alex Collins (2013) and Felix Jones (2007)
- » His 120 rushing yards are the 14th most by a true freshman in Arkansas single-game history
- » 77 rushing yards and one rushing touchdown on 13 carries vs.

Texas A&M 9/23/17

- » Two rushing touchdowns and 48 yards on 12 attempts vs. New Mexico 9/30/17
- » Became the first Arkansas true freshman running back with multiple rushing touchdowns in a game since 2011

**High School:**

- » Four-star recruit by Rivals
- » Three-star recruit by ESPN, Scout and 247
- » Position ranks: #4 (Rivals, 247 and 247Composite)
- » State ranks: #7 (Rivals), #10 (247), #10 (247 Composite)
- » National ranks: #169 (Rivals), #188 (247Composite)
- » Coached by David Carter
- » Named one of the top 10 performers at The Opening
- » Rushed for 7,000 yards and 92 touchdowns during his high school career
- » Named the male athlete of the year for Division 2 by The Commercial Appeal
- » Earned Division 2A All-State honors from the Tennessee Sports Writers Association as a senior
- » Finalist for the Division II-A Mr. Back award
- » District 2-A West 2 Player of the Year
- » Rushed for 1,940 yards on 160 attempts for a 12.1 yard per carry average his senior season
- » Scored 29 touchdowns, including 27 on the ground his senior season
- » Eight receptions for 159 yards while also making 51 tackles to go along with 16 pass breakups on defense as a senior
- » Played in the 15th Annual AutoZone Liberty Bowl All-Star game
- » As a junior, he was named Tennessee's Mr. Football and Mr. Basketball in Division 2-A to become the first person in the first 31 years of both awards to win each in the same year
- » Rushed for an area-best 2,625 yards and 32 touchdowns as a junior
- » Averaged 10.9 yards per carry added five receiving TDs on 19 receptions as a junior
- » Rushed for 266 yards in the state title game against Northpoint
- » 1,715 rushing yards and 20 touchdowns as a sophomore
- » Two-time Tennessee Division 2-A Mr. Basketball winner (2015, 16)
- » Became St. George's all-time leading scorer in basketball during his senior season with 2,030 career points
- » Averaged 24.4 points, 6.5 assists and 2.8 steals per game
- » Shot 47.5 from the field and 3-point range, and 87 percent from the free-throw line
- » As a junior, averaged 24.6 points, five rebounds, three steals and 2.6 assists per game

**Personal:**

- » Born April 2, 1999
- » Son of ChaToya and Aaron Hayden
- » Father, Aaron Hayden, rushed for over 2,000 yards at Tennessee from 1991-94 and played four years in the NFL after being drafted in the fourth round in 1995
- » Two younger brothers, Dallan and Cullen
- » Graduated with a degree in business marketing from Arkansas
- » Enrolled in the strategic brand communication graduate program

**CAREER HIGHS**

Rushing Attempts: 14 vs Florida A&M 08/31/17  
 Rushing Yards: 120 vs Florida A&M 08/31/17  
 Rushing Touchdowns: 2 vs New Mexico St. 09/30/17  
 Longest Rush: 40 vs Auburn 10/21/17  
 Receptions: 5 vs Vanderbilt 10/27/18  
 Receiving Yards 31 vs UCF 09/26/20  
 Longest Reception: 31 vs UCF 09/26/20  
 Longest Kick Return: 18 vs San Jose St. 09/21/19

**RUSHING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	ATT	YDS	TD	LG	AVG/C	AVG/G
2017	ARK	7	61	326	4	40	5.3	46.6
2018	ARK	12	57	251	1	38	4.4	20.9
2019	ARK	4	12	39	0	15	3.3	9.8
2020	ECU	3	16	62	0	11	3.9	20.7
2021	ILL	6	5	18	0	6	3.6	3.0
ILL TOTAL		6	5	18	0	6	3.6	3.0

TOTAL 32 151 696 5 40 4.6 21.8

**RECEIVING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2017	ARK	7	1	23	0	23	0.1	23.0	3.3
2018	ARK	12	11	61	0	20	0.9	5.5	5.1
2019	ARK	4	4	12	0	6	1.0	3.0	3.0
2020	ECU	3	1	31	0	31	0.3	31.0	10.3
2021	ILL	6	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
ILL TOTAL		6	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL		32	17	127	0	31	0.5	7.5	4.0

## 7 BRIAN HIGHTOWER

WR, 6-3, 215, JR.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. / IMG ACADEMY / MIAMI (FLA.)

**2021 Junior:**

- » Played in four games, including one start, and redshirted the season
- » Started against Rutgers 10/30/21

**2020 Junior:**

- » Played in all eight games and started seven at wide receiver
- » 11 catches for 209 yards and three touchdowns
- » Tied for team lead in touchdowns (3)
- » First Illinois career catch and four catches for 97 yards in home opener against Purdue 10/31/20
- » Made Illinois debut in the season opener at Wisconsin 10/23/20
- » Immediate eligible after receiving an NCAA waiver

**2019 Sophomore (Miami, Fla.):**

- » Played in seven games
- » Eight receptions for 88 yards

**2018 Freshman (Miami, Fla.):**

- » Played in 11 games in regular season and made three starts
- » Finished with four catches for 60 yards and one touchdown
- » Caught first touchdown pass of career in debut vs. LSU 9/2/18, hauling in 32-yard pass in end zone for first career catch
- » 8-yard reception at Toledo 9/15/18
- » 13-yard reception in win over North Carolina 9/27/18
- » 7-yard catch in come-from-behind win vs. Florida State 10/6/18
- » Played in games versus Boston College 10/26/18 and Duke 11/3/18
- » Played in wins over Virginia Tech 11/17/18 and Pittsburgh 11/24/18
- » Started New Era Pinstripe Bowl vs. Wisconsin 12/27/18

**High School:**

- » Consensus four-star prospect by ESPN, 247Sports.com and Rivals.com
- » #36 wide receiver in the nation and #32 prospect in state of Florida by 247Sports
- » Ranked among top 300 recruits by ESPN.com
- » Participated in The Opening in summer of 2017
- » Selected to 2018 U.S. Army All-American Bowl in San Antonio
- » As senior at IMG, led team with 35 catches for 445 yards and five touchdowns
- » Posted breakout sophomore season at Calabasas High School (Calif.) in 2015, as he caught 71 passes for 1,344 yards and 14 touchdowns before transferring to IMG Academy in 2016
- » Chose Miami over offers from Alabama, Clemson and USC, among others
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

**Personal:**

- » Born July 17, 1999
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

**CAREER HIGHS**

Receptions: 5 vs Bethune-Cookman 09/14/19  
 Receiving Yards: 97 vs Purdue 10/31/20  
 Receiving Touchdowns: 1 4 times  
 Longest Reception: 46 at Northwestern 12/12/20

**RECEIVING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
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2018	MIAMI	11	4	60	1	32	0.4	15.0	5.5
2019	MIAMI	7	8	88	0	19	1.1	11.0	12.6
2020	ILL	8	11	209	3	46	1.4	9.0	26.1
2021	ILL	4	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
ILL TOTAL		12	11	209	3	46	1.4	9.0	26.1
TOTAL		30	23	357	4	46	0.8	15.5	11.9

## 6 ASHTON HOLLINS

WR, 6-5, 180, FR.  
LUCEDALE, MISS. / GEORGE COUNTY

### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #79 (ESPN), #138 (247)
- » State ranks: #22 (ESPN), #38 (247)
- » Played for head coach James Ray at George County
- » 2021 Bernard Blackwell Classic All-Star Game
- » Also played basketball and baseball in high school

### Personal:

- » Born November 4, 2003
- » Son of Brandy Andrews and Joey Hollins
- » One brother, Jared
- » Chose Illinois because, "When I got to Illinois, the whole football staff made it easy. It made me feel like I was at home. They treated my family like royalty and it was just easy to pick where I was going to go. One special thing is Coach Bielema. He figured out that it was my grandparents' anniversary while on my official visit and he got them an anniversary cake. The coaches knew I had doubts of it being so far from home and Coach McDonald showed me his family and eliminated all fears of being homesick. All the coaches in Illinois make me feel right at home and this is where I'm supposed to be. That is why I chose Illinois to be my home for the next four years."

## 33 EZEKIEL HOLMES

OLB, 6-5, 245, JR.  
WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS / HIRSCHI

### 2021 Sophomore:

- » Played in all 12 games
- » Five tackles and 1.0 TFL on the season
- » Recorded 1.0 TFL and three tackles against Virginia 9/11/21

### 2020 Sophomore:

- » Played in four games on the defensive line

### 2019 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Played in one game
- » Made Illinois debut in the season opener against Akron

### 2018 Freshman:

- » Redshirted 2018 season (Did not play)

### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 60 weakside defensive end in the nation by 247Sports
- » Played for head coach Danny Youngs at Hirschi
- » Three-time all-district
- » 2017 all-state second team
- » 96 tackles, 38.0 TFLs, 6.0 sacks, two interceptions, two forced fumbles, two fumble recoveries and two touchdowns as senior
- » 39 tackles, 1.0 sack, one interception and two fumble recoveries as a junior
- » Also played basketball and threw shot put in high school
- » Verbally committed to Illinois in February 2018
- » Offers included Air Force and Washington State

### Personal:

- » Born July 7, 2000
- » Son of Enez and Ronnie Holmes
- » One older brother, Ronnie A. Holmes, one older sister, Alexis Brown, and one younger sister, Miracle Holmes

- » Plans to be an accountant or work with kids following his playing career
- » Picked Illinois because, "Illinois was the best option for me to develop into a good young man."
- » Plays the piano and drums
- » Majoring in sociology

### CAREER HIGHS

Tackles: 3 at Virginia 09/11/21  
Tackles For Loss: 1 at Virginia 09/11/21

### DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2018	ILL	1	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019	ILL	4	0	1	1	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	ILL	12	2	3	5	1-1	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		17	2	4	6	1-1	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 45 MALACHI HOOD

LB, 6-2, 220, FR.  
PLAINFIELD, ILL. / JOLIET CATHOLIC

### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #51 (On3), #75 (247), #96 (ESPN)
- » State ranks: #14 (On3), #25 (ESPN), #26 (247)
- » Played for head coach Jake Jaworski at Joliet Catholic
- » Three-year letterwinner
- » Led Joliet Catholic to the 2021 IHSA 4A state championship

### Personal:

- » Born December 30, 2003
- » Son of Josephine and Michael Hood
- » One brother, Michael Jr., and one sister, Michala
- » Cousin, Marcus Hood, played linebacker at Illinois from 1997-2000
- » Chose Illinois because, "The 'famILLy' atmosphere felt like home to me. I have a long line of family legacy at this school as well."
- » Plans to major in business
- » Plans to start a clothing business in the future

## 11 JAKE HUBER

QB, 6-1, 205, R-FR.  
SPRING GROVE, ILL. / RICHMOND-BURTON

### High School:

- » Played for head coach Mike Noll at Richmond-Burton
- » Led Richmond-Burton to a 2019 IHSA 4A state championship
- » Led Richmond-Burton to Kishwaukee River Conference championships in 2019 and 2020
- » 2019 and 2020 All-Kishwaukee River Conference
- » Also played basketball for four years and baseball as a freshman
- » Academic All-State

### Personal:

- » Born July 4, 2003
- » Son of Paul and Gina Huber
- » Two sisters, Jessica and Mia
- » Majoring in mechanical engineering

## 17 GABE JACAS

OLB, 6-3, 265, FR.  
PORT ST. LUCIE, FLA. / FORT PIERCE CENTRAL

### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #60 (247), #70 (On3)
- » State ranks: #116 (On3), #135 (247)
- » Played for head coach Mike Watkins at Fort Pierce Central
- » State champion and all-state wrestler
- » 2021-22 TCPalm Male Athlete of the Year

- » Offers included Georgia Southern, FIU, Mississippi State, South Florida, Tennessee, and Tulane

## 6 TERRELL JENNINGS

DB, 6-1, 190, SR.  
KNOB HILL, COLO. / PINE CREEK / MINNESOTA STATE

### 2020-21 Junior (Minnesota State):

- » Played and started in 10 games for Minnesota State in 2021 after the 2020 season was cancelled due to COVID
- » 19 tackles, an interception and broke up four passes
- » Season-best five tackles against Southwest Minnesota State
- » NSIC All-Academic Team

### 2018 Sophomore (North Dakota):

- » Played in three games as a sophomore in 2018

### 2017 Freshman (Santa Barbara City College):

- » 26 tackles, two interceptions and a fumble recovery in eight games

### High School:

- » Originally planned to attend Oklahoma to play rugby

### Personal:

- » Nicknamed "Rello"

### CAREER HIGHS

Tackles: 5 at Southwest Minnesota State 11/06/21  
Interceptions: 1 at Southwest Minnesota State 11/06/21

### DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2018	UND	3	0	2	2	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	MNST	10	15	4	19	0-0	5	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL		13	15	6	21	0-0	5	0	0	0	0	1

## 17 RYAN JOHNSON

QB, 6-4, 225, SR.  
GREEN BAY, WIS. / ASHWAUBENON / NORTHERN MICHIGAN

### 2021 Junior:

- » Played one snap in Illinois' win at #20 Minnesota 11/6/21
- » Transferred to Illinois with two years of eligibility remaining

### 2020 Junior (Northern Michigan):

- » Season cancelled due to COVID-19

### 2019 Sophomore (Northern Michigan):

- » Appeared in all 10 games
- » Completed 203 passes for 1,263 yards and eight touchdowns

### 2018 Sophomore (Northern Michigan):

- » Missed the season due to injury

### 2017 Freshman (Northern Michigan):

- » Appeared in eight games
- » Completed 122 passes for 1,581 yards and nine touchdowns
- » Threw for a career-high 363 yards on 20-of-30 passing against Saginaw Valley

### High School:

- » All-conference first team
- » All-area second team
- » Participated in the Green Bay Packers Passing Championship

### Personal:

- » Born July 2, 1998
- » Son of Paul and Jill Johnson
- » Two brothers, Tyler and Charles
- » Chose Illinois because, "The family atmosphere, outstanding academics and athletics, as well as the opportunity to continue to compete at a high level and achieve the goals I have set for myself."
- » Graduated with a degree in finance and risk management from Northern Michigan
- » Enrolled in the strategic brand communication master's program

**CAREER HIGHS**

Rushing Attempts: 10 at Penn St. 10/23/21  
 Rushing Yards: 33 vs UTSA 09/04/21  
 Longest Rush: 14 at Maryland 12/12/20, vs UTSA 09/04/21  
 Passing Attempts: 46 vs Illinois 10/06/18  
 Completions: 29 vs Illinois 10/06/18  
 Passing Yards: 304 vs Boston College 09/21/19  
 Passing Touchdowns: 3 vs UTSA 09/04/21  
 Longest Pass: 74 vs Boston College 09/21/19

**PASSING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	COMP	ATT	INT	YDS	TD	LG	PCT	AVG/P	AVG/G	EFF
2017	NMU	10	122	203	4	1581	9	80	60.1	13.0	158.1	136.2
2018	NMU	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2019	NMU	10	101	204	6	1263	8	75	49.5	12.5	126.3	108.6
2021	ILL	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
ILL TOTAL		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL		22	223	407	10	2844	17	80	54.8	12.8	129.3	122.4

**RUSHING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	ATT	YDS	TD	LG	AVG/C	AVG/G
2017	NMU	10	35	-176	0	15	-5.0	-17.6
2018	NMU	1	1	2	0	2	2.0	2.0
2019	NMU	10	33	-85	0	15	-2.6	-8.5
2021	ILL	1	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0
ILL TOTAL		1	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL		22	69	-259	0	15	-3.8	-11.8

**57 EVAN KIRTS****DL, 6-5, 300, SO.****EVERGREEN PARK, ILL. / BROTHER RICE****2021 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Did not play in a game

**2020 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game

**2019 Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game and redshirted

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, Rivals and ESPN
- » Ranked No. 116 offensive tackle in the nation by ESPN and No. 141 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 24 recruit in Illinois by ESPN and No. 42 by 247Sports
- » Two-year letterwinner in football
- » Played for coaches Tim Lyons and Brian Badke at Brother Rice
- » 2018 USA TODAY All-USA Illinois second team
- » 2018 EdgyTim.com All-State 5A-8A
- » 2018 Daily Southtown All-Area First Team
- » Led Brother Rice to an IHSA 8A state runner-up finish as a senior at Memorial Stadium
- » Helped Brother Rice score 405 points as a senior
- » Also played rugby in high school and was a state champion and all-conference selection
- » High Honor Roll & National Honor Society
- » Verbally committed to Illinois in November 2018
- » Offers included Ball State, Eastern Michigan, Northern Illinois, Virginia, and Western Michigan

**Personal:**

- » Born Sept. 19, 2000
- » Son of Dawn and Evan Kirts
- » One brother, Tyler, and one sister, April
- » Nicknamed "Cheese"
- » Picked Illinois because, "I loved my visit, coaches were awesome, liked the idea of playing for my home state."
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

**41 JAMES KREUTZ****LB, 6-0, 210, FR.****BANNOCKBURN, ILL. / LOYOLA ACADEMY****High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Position ranks: #183 (247)

- » State ranks: #35 (247)
- » Played for head coach John Holecek at Loyola Academy
- » 2021 Illinois High School Football Coaches Association 8A All-State first team
- » 2021 Chicago Catholic League Blue Defensive Player of the Year
- » 2021 Chicago Sun-Times All-Area
- » 2022 Polynesian Bowl invite
- » 137 tackles (69 solo), 19.0 TFLs, and 6.0 sacks as a senior
- » Played running back and linebacker in high school

**Personal:**

- » Born August 10, 2004
- » Son of Olin and Wendi Kreutz
- » Brother, Josh Kreutz, is a center for the Illinois football team
- » Father, Olin Kreutz, was a six-time Pro Bowler with the Chicago Bears

**64 JOSH KREUTZ****OL, 6-2, 280, R-FR.****BANNOCKBURN, ILL. / LOYOLA ACADEMY****2021 Freshman:**

- » Played in three games and redshirted the season

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 274Sports, ESPN, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #11 (ESPN), #12 (247)
- » State ranks: #22 (ESPN), #25 (247), #35 (Rivals)
- » Led Loyola to the 2018 Illinois Class 8A State Championship at Illinois' Memorial Stadium
- » Committed to Illinois on July 9, 2020
- » Offers included Ball State, Central Michigan, Memphis and Northern Illinois

**Personal:**

- » Born March 2, 2003
- » Father, Olin Kreutz, was a six-time Pro Bowler with the Chicago Bears
- » Father, James Kreutz, is a linebacker on the Illinois football team
- » Enrolled in general studies

**21 AIDAN LAUGHERY****RB, 5-11, 200, FR.****GIBSON CITY, ILL. / GCMS****High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #37 (On3), #42 (247), #51 (Rivals), #73 (ESPN)
- » State ranks: #11 (247), #12 (ESPN), #14 (Rivals), #17 (On3)
- » Played for head coach Mike Allen at GCMS
- » Played with fellow Illini Bryce Barnes in high school, leading GCMS to the IHSA 2A state title
- » Four-year letterwinner
- » Two-time all-conference
- » Also ran track in high school
- » Offers included Iowa, Michigan State, Minnesota, Rutgers, and Washington State

**Personal:**

- » Born October 1, 2003
- » Son of Mary and Greg Laughery
- » One brother, Andrew
- » Chose Illinois because, "The family culture and energy. When you know everybody is working at a collective goal for the same purpose and with the same drive you are, you are bound for success. It was an easy choice for me with how awesome the staff is."

**10 DONOVAN LEARY****QB, 6-2, 215, FR.****SICKLERVILLE, N.J. / TIMBER CREEK****High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #42 (On3), #50 (247), #53 (ESPN)
- » State ranks: #9 (On3), #14 (247), #25 (Rivals), #26 (ESPN)
- » Played for head coach Brian Wright at Timber Creek
- » Four-year letterwinner
- » Three-time all-conference
- » Offers included Boston College, Central Michigan, Colorado State, East Carolina, Maryland, Massachusetts, Rutgers, Temple, Toledo, and Virginia Tech

**Personal:**

- » Born December 21, 2003
- » Son of Glen and Lorie Leary
- » Two brothers, Andrew Willard and Devin Leary, and two sisters, Shannon Leary and Riley Leary
- » Brother, Devin, plays quarterback at North Carolina State
- » Chose Illinois because, "I feel that I am at home every time I am there. The family atmosphere throughout the students and the great academics the school offers will impact my life forever. Illinois will give me the best opportunity to be successful in life. The football program fits my needs and there is no other coach I'd rather play for than Coach B."
- » Plans to major in business
- » Plans to be a football coach following his playing career

**96 JOSH LEFF****P, 5-10, 190, FR.****WESTLAKE VILLAGE, CALIF. / SIERRA CANYON****High School:**

- » Played for head coach Jon Ellinghouse at Sierra Canyon
- » Helped lead Sierra Canyon to a Marmonte League championship in 2018 and a Gold Coast League championship in 2020 and 2021
- » Also played soccer in the first two years in high school then golf his last two years
- » Honor Roll
- » Lions Award
- » 4.0 GPA as a junior and senior

**Personal:**

- » Born January 9, 2004
- » Son of Rob and Jennifer Leff
- » One brother, Ryan
- » Chose Illinois because, "The family culture and it felt like home. The culture we have here at Illinois is something very rare and I'm very grateful to be a part of the family."
- » Majoring in advertising

**32 TAILON LEITZSEY****DB, 6-0, 190, SR.****LAUREL, MD. / RIVERSIDE / MISSOURI BAPTIST****2021 Senior:**

- » Played seven games
- » One of Illinois' most valuable special teams players
- » #9 special teams grade in the Big Ten among players with 50+ coverage snaps, according to PFF (77.8)
- » Awarded with a scholarship by head coach Bret Bielema during team meeting 4/6/21
- » Illinois Special Teams Player of the Week in the win at Minnesota 11/6/21

**2020 Senior:**

- » Played in one game

**2019 Junior:**

- » Did not play in a game

**2018 Sophomore:**

- » Redshirted 2018 season (Did not play)
- » Joined squad in September after walk-on tryouts

**Personal:**

- » Born Feb. 6, 1999
- » Graduated with a bachelor's degree in Kinesiology in 2020
- » Majoring in communication (second bachelor's)

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 1 vs UTSA 09/04/21

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2020	ILL	1	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	7	1	0	1	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		8	1	0	1	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 76 CLAYTON LEONARD

OL, 6-4, 290, FR.

DANFORTH, ILL. / IROQUOIS WEST

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and On3
- » Position ranks: #95 (On3), #125 (247)
- » State ranks: #27 (On3), #39 (247)
- » Played for head coach Jason Thiele at Iroquois West
- » Three-year letterwinner
- » 2021 Illinois High School Football Coaches Association 1A All-State first team
- » Two-time All-Vermillion Valley Conference offensive lineman and one-time All-Vermillion Valley Conference defensive lineman
- » Two-time News Gazette All-Area
- » Also played basketball in high school
- » Two-time Board Scholar
- » Offers included Central Michigan, Illinois State, and Toledo

**Personal:**

- » Born August 11, 2003
- » Son of Josh and Jenny Leonard
- » Two brothers, Cannon and Cort, and one sister, Phylcity
- » Chose Illinois because, "The atmosphere and the famILLy feel."
- » Plans to major in kinesiology
- » Plans to coach football following his playing career

## 99 CHRISTIAN LORENZO

DL, 6-3, 285, FR.

DEKALB, ILL. / DEKALB

**High School:**

- » Two-star recruit by 247Sports
- » Position ranks: #324 (247)
- » State ranks: #82 (247)
- » Played for head coach Matt Weckler at DeKalb
- » All-DuPage Valley Conference
- » Blue-Grey All-American Bowl invitation
- » Offers included Eastern Illinois, Murray State, and Northern Illinois

**Personal:**

- » Born April 24, 2004

## 23 REGGIE LOVE III

RB, 5-11, 205, SO.

ST. LOUIS, MO. / TRINITY CATHOLIC

**2021 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten

- » Third on the team with 44 carries for 158 rushing yards on the season
- » Rushed for a team-high 63 yards on 10 carries against Maryland 9/17/21
- » Rushed for a team-high 39 yards on 11 carries against UTSA 9/4/21
- » Rushed for 46 yards on 12 carries against Nebraska 8/28/21

**2020 Freshman:**

- » Played in six games at running back
- » 10 carries for 12 yards on the season
- » Made Illinois debut at Wisconsin 10/23/20

**High School:**

- » Four-star recruit by Rivals, three-star recruit by 247 and ESPN
- » National ranks: #178 (Rivals), #430 (247 Composite), #815 (247)
- » Running back ranks: #8 (Rivals), #31 (247 Composite), #56 (247), #65 (ESPN)
- » Missouri ranks: #4 (Rivals), #8 (247 Composite), #15 (247), #17 (ESPN)
- » 108 carries for 668 rushing yards and 10 touchdowns during his high school career
- » Played for head coach Cory Patterson, who is now an Illinois assistant, during his first two high school seasons
- » 2019 all-state, all-district, and all-metro
- » National Honor Society
- » Elizabeth Seton Scholar
- » Committed to Illinois on April 4, 2019, becoming the first commit to the Illini's class
- » Offers included Arkansas, Indiana, Iowa, Iowa State, Kansas, Kansas State, Kentucky, Louisville, Minnesota, Nebraska, Notre Dame, Penn State, Purdue, Syracuse, TCU, Tennessee, Utah, Vanderbilt, and Wisconsin

**Personal:**

- » Born October 11, 2001
- » Son of Reginald Love Jr. and Kimberly Dennis
- » One brother, Reginald, and three sisters, Reiaandra, Reginae, and Jordyn
- » Chose Illinois because it, "felt like home."
- » Plans to run his own business following his playing career
- » Majoring in general studies

**CAREER HIGHS**

Rushing Attempts: 12 vs Nebraska 08/28/21  
 Rushing Yards: 63 vs Maryland 09/17/21  
 Longest Rush: 33 vs Maryland 09/17/21  
 Receptions: 1 vs UTSA 09/04/21, at Virginia 09/11/21  
 Receiving Yards: 7 vs UTSA 09/04/21  
 Longest Reception: 7 vs UTSA 09/04/21

**RUSHING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	ATT	YDS	TD	LG	AVG/C	AVG/G
2020	ILL	7	10	12	0	8	1.2	1.7
2021	ILL	10	44	158	0	33	3.6	15.8
TOTAL		17	54	170	0	33	3.1	10.0

**RECEIVING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2020	ILL	7	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2021	ILL	10	2	12	0	7	0.2	6.0	1.2
TOTAL		17	2	12	0	7	0.1	6.0	0.7

## 26 MIKE MANNING

DB, 5-8, 190, SO.

FRANKFORT, ILL. / LINCOLN-WAY EAST / BUTLER

**2021 Sophomore:**

- » Did not play in a game
- » Scout Team Defense Player of the Week following the win against Nebraska 8/28/21
- » Scout Team Defense Player of the Week following the win at Minnesota 11/6/21
- » Transferred to Illinois with three years of eligibility remaining

**2020 Sophomore (Butler):**

- » Team captain
- » 2020-21 Academic All-Pioneer Football League second team

- » Started five games at safety
- » Ranked sixth on the team with 25 tackles
- » Made a season-high eight tackles in the season opener against Valpo 3/13/21
- » Season played in spring of 2021 due to COVID-19

**2019 Freshman (Butler):**

- » Played in 10 games
- » 16 tackles
- » Recorded a season-high five tackles at Marist 11/2/19

**High School:**

- » Three-year varsity starter at Lincoln-Way East
- » Helped his team post a 12-1 overall record that included a perfect 9-0 mark in conference
- » 2017 8A IHSA state champion
- » Four-time conference champion
- » 2018 Oland Park Prairie Team 22 honorable mention
- » Team captain in 2018
- » Also ran track

**Personal:**

- » Born November 29, 2000
- » Son of Anthony and Tabatha Manning
- » Brother, Joe, attended the University of Illinois and is currently finishing his master's degree
- » Chose Illinois because, "I have always wanted to play for the University of Illinois and I love the way the team culture is growing, it truly feels like a famILLy. Also, Illinois is incredible academically which will help me with my career goals as well."
- » Majoring in psychology

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 12 at Northwestern 12/12/20, at Penn St. 12/19/20  
 Tackles For Loss: 2 vs Eastern Mich. 09/14/19  
 Interceptions: 1 4 times

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2019	BUT	10	7	9	16	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	BUT	5	16	9	25	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		15	23	18	41	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 42 MICHAEL MARCHESE

TE, 6-4, 235, SR.

VERNON HILLS, ILL. / STEVENSON

**2021 Senior:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Played in 11 games with one start
- » Two receptions for 30 yards on the season
- » First career reception at Minnesota
- » Wuerffel Trophy watch list
- » Allstate Good Works Team nominee
- » Switched to tight end during 2021 spring practices
- » Awarded with a scholarship by head coach Bret Bielema during team meeting 4/6/21

**2020 Senior:**

- » Played in four games and started two at linebacker
- » 16 tackles and one PBU on the season
- » Made first start of the season at Northwestern 12/12/20

**2019 Junior:**

- » Played in 12 games, primarily on special teams
- » Five tackles, one interception on the season
- » Second career interception at UConn 9/7/19

**2018 Sophomore:**

- » Played 11 games with three starts at safety
- » 21 tackles, two PBUs, one interception, one fumble recovery and one QB hurry on season
- » Career-high 11 tackles at Northwestern 11/24/18
- » First career start and first career interception against Western Illinois 9/8/18

- » Missed the season opener with an injury
- » Academic All-Big Ten

**2017 Freshman:**

- » Walkon played in five games, primarily on special teams
- » Two tackles, one fumble recovery on the season
- » Made his Illinois debut against Wisconsin in the eighth game of the season
- » First career fumble recovery on a muffed punt at Purdue

**High School:**

- » Two-year letterwinner in football
- » Three-year letterwinner in baseball
- » All-conference and all-area selection in football
- » Four-time member of the Green Honor Roll

**Personal:**

- » Born Oct. 23, 1998
- » Son of John and Julie Marchese
- » Three brothers, Joe, Jim and Henry
- » Father played football at Iowa from 1982-86
- » Twin brother Henry played football at Iowa from 2017-21
- » Brother, Jimmy, played football at Illinois from 2015-18
- » Brother, Joe, played football at Maryland from 2013-17
- » Uncle, Dan, played football at Army from 1978-82
- » Chose Illinois because, "The academic and athletic excellence of the school and I loved the campus, the people and the coaching staff."
- » Plans to work in football or business/law after playing career
- » Graduated with a degree in economics
- » Enrolled in the management master's program

**CAREER HIGHS**

Receptions: 1 at Minnesota 11/06/21, vs Northwestern 11/27/21  
 Receiving Yards 15 at Minnesota 11/06/21, vs Northwestern 11/27/21  
 Longest Reception: 15 at Minnesota 11/06/21, vs Northwestern 11/27/21  
 Tackles: 11 at Northwestern 11/24/18  
 Interceptions: 1 at UConn 09/07/19, vs Western Ill. 09/08/18

**RECEIVING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2017	ILL	5	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2018	ILL	11	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2019	ILL	12	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2020	ILL	4	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2021	ILL	11	2	30	0	15	0.2	15.0	2.7
TOTAL		43	2	30	0	15	0.0	15.0	0.7

## 21 JARTAVIUS MARTIN

DB, 6-0, 195, SR.

LEHIGH ACRES, FLA. / LEHIGH ACRES

**2021 Senior:**

- » 55 tackles, 3.5 TFLs, one interception, seven pass breakups, and one forced fumbles on the season
- » #2 tackling grade among Big Ten cornerbacks in 2021, according to PFF (88.8)
- » Second on the team with seven pass breakups
- » Fifth on the team with 55 tackles
- » 10 tackles, 1.0 TFLs, one forced fumble, and one PBU against Maryland 9/17/21
- » Seven tackles, 0.5 TFL, and one PBU against Virginia 9/11/21

**2020 Junior:**

- » Played in all eight games and started two at defensive back
- » 38 tackles, one forced fumble, two PBUs on the season
- » Made first start of the season at Northwestern 12/12/20

**2019 Sophomore:**

- » Played in 12 games with five starts at cornerback
- » 23 tackles, 2.0 TFLs, two fumbles recovered on the season
- » Fourth in the Big Ten in fumble recoveries (2)
- » Moved from cornerback to safety in the middle of the season

**2018 Freshman:**

- » Played 10 games with eight starts at corner
- » 42 tackles, 1.5 TFLs, three PBUs and three interceptions
- » Second on the team in interceptions (3)

- » Tied for the fifth-most starts by an Illinois true freshman DB (8)
- » Career-high seven tackles against Nebraska 11/10/18 and at Rutgers 10/6/18
- » Third interception of the season against Rutgers 10/6/18
- » One of two true freshmen in the nation with multiple interceptions in the first three weeks of the season (Andre Cisco, Syracuse)
- » Second career interception against South Florida in the third game of the season
- » First career interception in his first career game, the season opener against Kent State
- » Started the season opener and made his Illinois debut against Kent State 9/1/18
- » Second Illinois true freshman cornerback to start the first two games of the season since 1980, joining Vontae Davis (2006)

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and ESPN
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Ranked No. 101 safety in the nation by ESPN and No. 105 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 206 recruit in Florida by ESPN and No. 206 by 247Sports
- » 87 tackles, one interception and one fumble recovery as senior
- » 38 tackles and two interceptions as a junior
- » Verbally committed to Illinois in July 2017

**Personal:**

- » Born April 17, 2000
- » Majoring in communication

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 12 at Northwestern 12/12/20, at Penn St. 12/19/20  
 Tackles For Loss: 2 vs Eastern Mich. 09/14/19  
 Interceptions: 1 4 times

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2018	ILL	10	25	17	42	1.5-4	3	0	0	0	0	3
2019	ILL	12	14	9	23	2-6	0	0	2	0	0	0
2020	ILL	8	25	13	38	0-0	2	1	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	12	33	22	55	2.5-11	7	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL		42	97	61	158	6-21	12	2	2	0	0	4

## 12 ELIJAH Mc-CANTOS

DB, 6-0, 180, FR.

MIAMI, FLA. / EDISON

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #45 (Rivals), #71 (On3), #97 (247)
- » State ranks: #63 (Rivals), #74 (On3), #126 (247)
- » Played for head coach Luther Campbell at Edison
- » Also participated in basketball, track, and wrestling in high school
- » Offers included Appalachian State, Arizona State, FIU, Florida Atlantic, Georgia State, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana-Monroe, Marshall, Michigan, Penn State, Syracuse, Toledo, UAB, Utah State, Wake Forest, Washington State, and Western Michigan

**Personal:**

- » Born May 3, 2003
- » Son of Carole Rodney
- » One Brother, Clifford Mc-Cantos, and one sister, Brianna Guillaume
- » Plans to major in communication

## 55 SED McCONNELL

DL, 6-2, 280, R-FR.

ATLANTA, GA. / WESTLAKE

**2021 Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #72 (247), #124 (ESPN)
- » State ranks: #101 (247), #114 (ESPN)
- » Also played basketball and lacrosse in high school
- » Committed to Illinois on May 20, 2020
- » Offers included Akron, Coastal Carolina, Duke, Liberty, Minnesota, Pittsburgh, Wake Forest and West Virginia

**Personal:**

- » Born Oct. 28, 2002
- » Majoring in general studies

## 0 JOSH McCRAY

RB, 6-1, 235, SO.

ENTERPRISE, ALA. / ENTERPRISE

**2021 Freshman:**

- » 112 carries for 549 rushing yards and two rushing touchdowns on the season
- » Second on the team in carries (112) and rushing yards (549)
- » Ninth in the Big Ten in rushing yards per carry (4.9)
- » 14th in the nation in rushing yards per carry among freshmen (4.9)
- » 14th in the Big Ten in rushing yards per game (49.9)
- » Rushed for 142 yards at #7 Penn State 10/23/21, the most rushing yards ever by an Illini true freshman against a ranked opponent
- » Rushed for career-high 156 yards on a career-high 24 attempts against Purdue 9/25/21
- » 156 rushing yards at Purdue were the fifth-most in a game by a true freshman in 2021 and the most by a true freshman in a road game in 2021
- » Rushed for 60 yards on eight attempts including his first-career touchdown before leaving the game with an injury against Maryland 9/17/21
- » Finished with five carries for 18 yards in his Illinois debut against UTSA 9/4/21
- » Illinois victory team MVP against Nebraska 8/28/21

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #103 (247), #125 (ESPN)
- » State ranks: #35 (Rivals), #75 (ESPN), #81 (247)
- » 2020 Alabama Sports Writers Association Class 7A All-State first team
- » 2018 Alabama Sports Writers Association Class 7A All-State second team
- » Three-time Southeast Sun Player of the Year
- » Rushed for 774 yards and 11 touchdowns as a senior, averaging 7.0 yards per carry (111 carries), and caught 28 passes for 440 yards and six touchdowns as a senior
- » Returned two kickoffs for touchdowns as a senior
- » Rushed for 604 yards and seven touchdowns as a junior
- » Started games at running back, safety, linebacker and wide receiver for Enterprise
- » Played for head coach Rick Darlington at Enterprise
- » Helped Enterprise reach the 2020 Alabama 7A state playoffs
- » Under Armor All-America Camp Series invite
- » ESPN300 Elite Underclassmen Camp invite
- » Rivals Camp Series invite
- » Also played basketball in high school
- » Committed to Illinois on January 5, 2021
- » Offers included Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Washington State

**Personal:**

- » Born February 24, 2002
- » Son of Chris Ann
- » Chose Illinois because, "of the family atmosphere"
- » Majoring in general studies

**CAREER HIGHS**

Rushing Attempts: 24 at Purdue 09/25/21, at Penn St. 10/23/21

Rushing Yards: 156 at Purdue 09/25/21

Rushing Touchdowns: 1 vs Maryland 09/17/21, vs Northwestern 11/27/21

Longest Rush: 38 vs Maryland 09/17/21, at Purdue 09/25/21

Receptions: 1 vs Maryland 09/17/21, at Iowa 11/20/21

Receiving Yards: 40 vs Maryland 09/17/21

Longest Reception: 40 vs Maryland 09/17/21

#### RUSHING STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	ATT	YDS	TD	LG	AVG/C	AVG/G
2021	ILL	11	112	549	2	38	4.9	49.9
TOTAL		11	112	549	2	38	4.9	49.9

#### RECEIVING STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2021	ILL	11	2	43	0	40	0.2	21.5	3.9
TOTAL		11	2	43	0	40	0.2	21.5	3.9

## 16 WILL McMANUS

**K, 5-10, 185, FR.**

**GLYNDON, MD. / THE HUN SCHOOL (N.J.)**

#### High School:

- » Played soccer for four years of high school before doing a post-grad year for football
- » Captain of the US Youth National Futsal team in Argentina during his junior year
- » Played football for head coach Todd Smith at The Hun School
- » All-conference, All-Northeast Prep, and All-Mid-Atlantic Prep

#### Personal:

- » Born January 30, 2003
- » Son of George and Laura McManus
- » One sister, Madeline
- » Sister, Madeline, is on the equestrian team at Virginia Tech
- » Chose Illinois because, "of the opportunity that was at hand, it was really hard to turn down Power-5 football, especially at a program with an unbelievable staff that puts a big emphasis on special teams and the kicking game."
- » Intends to major in business

## 34 RYAN MEED

**LB, 6-1, 230, SO.**

**BROOKLYN, N.Y. / CANARSIE**

#### 2021 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Played in seven games
- » Award scholarship by head coach Bret Bielema 9/8/21

#### 2020 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Played in four games, primarily on special teams

#### 2019 Freshman:

- » Played the final four games and redshirted the season
- » Made Illinois debut on special teams against Michigan State to help Illinois win 37-34 in the biggest comeback in program history

#### High School:

- » Played for head coach Brian Ellis at Canarsie
- » 70 tackles, 10 TFLs, five sacks as a senior
- » 2018 All-City Conference
- » 2018 All-City
- » 2018 Defensive Player of the Year
- » Also participated in track and field in high school

#### Personal:

- » Born Sept. 30, 2001
- » Son of Regina and Tony McWilliams
- » Two sisters, Raina and Madison, and one brother, Christopher
- » Picked Illinois because, "from my first contact with Coach Ligashesky to my visit, it felt like family. That in addition to the academic prestige and the great school community, it was a no brainer."
- » Majoring in kinesiology

#### CAREER HIGHS

Tackles: 1 vs Iowa 12/05/20

#### DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2019	ILL	4	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	ILL	4	1	0	1	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	7	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		15	1	0	1	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 12 KIRKLAND MICHAX

**QB, 6-4, 225, FR.**

**AUSTIN, TEXAS / WESTLAKE**

#### 2021-22 Freshman (Blinn JC):

- » Played baseball at Blinn Junior College
- » Appeared in five games as a pitcher with 15 strikeouts

#### High School:

- » Played for head coach Todd Dodge at Westlake
- » Lettered three years in football in high school
- » Helped Westlake win the 6A Texas State Championship in 2020
- » Texas State Offensive MVP in the 2020 state title game

#### Personal:

- » Born August 17, 2001
- » Son of Mike and Deedee Michaux
- » One sister, Gracie
- » Majoring in agriculture business

## 18 CHASE MILLER

**WR, 6-1, 180, FR.**

**BALTIMORE, MD. / IMG ACADEMY (FLA.)**

#### High School:

- » Played for head coach Pepper Johnson at IMG Academy
- » Honor Roll
- » Also played baseball in high school

#### Personal:

- » Born June 17, 2003
- » Son of Bill and Janet Miller
- » One sister, Courtney
- » Chose Illinois because, "I loved the strong football culture along with a great coaching staff. It was overall the best fit for me."
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

## 8 SHAWN MILLER

**WR, 6-1, 195, FR.**

**CHANDLER, ARIZ. / IMG ACADEMY (FLA.)**

#### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #73 (Rivals), #76 (ESPN), #79 (247)
- » State ranks: #70 (ESPN), #72 (247), #77 (Rivals)
- » Played for head coaches Bobby Acosta and Pepper Johnson at IMG Academy
- » Helped IMG to the 2020 national title
- » Helped Saguaro High School to the 2018 state title
- » Honor Roll for four years
- » Offers included Arizona, Arizona State, Indiana, Miami (Fla.), Michigan State, North Carolina State, Old Dominion, Syracuse, UNLV, and West Virginia

#### Personal:

- » Born January 7, 2003
- » Son of Melissa Cisneros and Lawann Miller
- » One sister, Avery

## 56 MAGNUS MØLLER

**OL, 6-9, 310, FR.**

**VEJLE, DENMARK / RØDKILDE GYMNASIUM**

#### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports
- » Position ranks: #81 (247)
- » Played for head coach Peter Nicolajsen for the Triangle Razorbacks club team
- » 2021 Denmark national team captain
- » 2020 team offensive MVP
- » Offers included Central Michigan, Cincinnati, Eastern Michigan, Fresno State, Louisville, and Massachusetts
- » Also did Taekwondo for seven years and was the youngest in Denmark to get a youth black belt at the time

#### Personal:

- » Born March 28, 2003
- » Son of Rikke Møller
- » Stepfather was the first British person to receive a scholarship to an American High School for football and played for over 30 years with the Sussex Thunder in England and the Triangle Razorbacks in Denmark
- » Two brothers, Morten and Peter
- » Brother played club football for the Triangle Razorbacks and has been on both the youth and senior national teams in Denmark
- » Chose Illinois because, "The family feeling. Many places have great football. Illinois was the one place that truly felt like home. On top of that they do have great football."
- » Plans to major in psychology
- » Plans to be a football coach following his playing career

## 43 GRIFFIN MOORE

**TE, 6-4, 250, SO.**

**BLOOMINGTON, ILL. / BLOOMINGTON**

#### 2021 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Played in one game

#### 2020 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Played in two games
- » Made Illinois debut at Northwestern 12/12/20

#### 2019 Freshman:

- » Redshirted the 2019 season

#### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and ESPN
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Ranked No. 84 tight end in the nation by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 139 athlete in the nation by ESPN
- » Ranked No. 31 recruit in Illinois by ESPN and No. 46 by 247Sports
- » Two-year letterwinner in football
- » Played for head coach Scott Godfrey as a senior and head coach Joe Walters as a junior at Bloomington
- » 2018 Class 6A IHSFCA All-State
- » 2018 USA TODAY All-USA Illinois second team
- » Played mostly quarterback in high school, throwing for 1,957 yards and 31 touchdowns as a senior and 857 yards and five touchdowns as a junior
- » Averaged 37.7 yards per punt with eight down inside the 20-yard line as a senior
- » 2018 all-conference first-team quarterback and second-team punter
- » 2018 Pantagraph All-Area first-team punter and honorable mention quarterback
- » Also played basketball at Bloomington
- » Verbally committed to Illinois in March 2018
- » Offers included Illinois State

#### Personal:

- » Born Aug. 1, 2000
- » Son of Angie and Tim Moore
- » Father is the principal at Bloomington High School
- » Father played football at Eastern Illinois

- » One younger brother, Landon
- » Nicknamed "Griff"
- » Chose No. 13 because of his friend Kai Bates Diop (younger brother of NBA player Keita), who had a heart attack while playing basketball and can no longer play competitive sports
- » Picked Illinois because, "The opportunity to represent my home state and help turn around the program."
- » Plans to work in sports following his playing career as an agent, front office administrator or coach
- » Majoring in general studies

## 11 JONAH MORRIS

WR, 6-4, 220, SR.  
AKRON, OHIO / HOBAN / NORTHERN COLORADO

### 2021 Junior (Northern Colorado):

- » 20 receptions for 143 yards and one touchdown
- » Season highs in receptions (8), receiving yards (74), and touchdowns (1) against Houston Baptist

### 2019 Junior (Akron):

- » President's List for perfect 4.0 GPA
- » Dean's List
- » Missed the 2019 season following an injury in training camp
- » 2019 Phil Steele Preseason All-MAC fourth team

### 2018 Sophomore (Akron):

- » Started all 12 games at wide receiver
- » 26 receptions for 381 yards and a touchdown on the season
- » Third on the team in receiving yards (381)
- » Four receptions for 94 yards and a touchdown in his Akron debut against Morgan State
- » Three receptions for 51 yards, including a 43-yard catch, in a win at Northwestern

### 2017 Redshirt Freshman (Indiana):

- » Played in nine games, primarily on special teams
- » Indiana's Special Teams Player of the Game against Illinois

### 2016 Freshman (Indiana):

- » Redshirted the season
- » Indiana's Scout Team Player of the Week against Purdue

### High School:

- » Three-year letterwinner, team captain, and three-year starter for head coach Tim Tyrell at Archbishop Hoban
- » MaxPreps All-American
- » Player of the Year by the Akron Beacon Journal and the Akron Touchdown Club
- » Northeast Ohio Inland Defensive Player of the Year
- » All-State first team, All-District, and All-League selection
- » 2015 Blue-Grey All-American Bowl
- » Led Hoban to the 2015 state championship, the first in program history
- » Team won a school-record 14 games and finished 14-1
- » No. 228 prospect overall and the No. 1 athlete in the Midwest by Scout
- » No. 18 athlete nationally and the No. 13 prospect in Ohio by 247Sports
- » Also lettered in basketball and track and field

### Personal:

- » Born December 4
- » Son of Aleste Gaiter and John R. Morris, Jr.

### CAREER HIGHS

Receptions: 8 at Houston Baptist 09/11/21  
Receiving Yards: 94 vs Morgan State 09/08/18  
Longest Reception: 43 at Northwestern 09/15/18

### RECEIVING STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2017	IND	9	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2018	AKRON	12	26	381	1	43	2.2	14.7	31.8
2021	NCOLO	5	20	143	1	39	4.0	7.2	28.6
TOTAL		26	46	524	2	43	1.8	7.2	20.2

## 4 JER'ZHAN NEWTON

DL, 6-2, 295, SO.  
ST. PETERSBURG, FLA. / CLEARWATER CENTRAL CATHOLIC

### 2022 Sophomore:

- » Athlon Preseason All-Big Ten fourth team

### 2021 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Played in 12 games with 11 starts
- » All-Big Ten honorable mention (media)
- » Phil Steele All-Big Ten fourth team
- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » 50 tackles, 4.0 TFLs, and 3.0 sacks on the season
- » Fourth-most snaps played among defensive linemen in the Big Ten (601)
- » Tied for third on the team with 3.0 sacks
- » Sixth on the team with 4.0 TFLs
- » Seventh on the team with 50 tackles
- » 50 tackles led the team among defensive linemen
- » Six tackles and 1.0 TFL in Illinois' 90T upset over No. 7 Penn State 10/23/21
- » 1.0 sacks against Maryland 9/17/21
- » Illinois team defensive MVP against Nebraska 8/28/21

### 2020 Freshman:

- » Played in all eight games and started two at defensive tackle
- » 23 tackles, 1.5 TFL one forced fumble on the season
- » First career forced fumble against Purdue 10/31/20
- » Highest rated true freshman defender (85.8) by PFF after his first career forced fumble and two tackles against Purdue 10/31/20
- » The 18th true freshman to start a game on the defensive line in Illinois history
- » Made Illinois debut at Wisconsin 10/23/20

### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247, ESPN, and Rivals
- » National ranks: #821 (247), #1024 (247 Composite)
- » Defensive tackle ranks: #42 (247), #56 (247 Composite)
- » Defensive end ranks: #86 (ESPN)
- » Florida ranks: #94 (247), #125 (ESPN), #134 (247 Composite)
- » Played for head coach Chris Harvey at Clearwater Central Catholic
- » 2019 MaxPreps All-American
- » 244 tackles, 24.0 sacks, 45.0 TFLs, five forced fumbles in his high school career
- » 104 tackles, 16.0 sacks, 29.5 TFLs, three forced fumbles as a senior
- » Honor Roll
- » Also played basketball in high school
- » Offers included Boston College, Cincinnati, Colorado State, Florida, Florida State, Georgia Tech, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas State, Kentucky, Maryland, Miami (Fla.), North Carolina, Rutgers, Syracuse, UCF, USF, Virginia Tech, and West Virginia

### Personal:

- » Born Aug. 31, 2002
- » Son of Jervon Newton and Jovita Rich
- » Four brothers, Jervon, Jerquan, Jerjuan, Jershaun
- » Brothers, Jervon and Jerquan, played football at West Florida
- » Brother, Jerjuan, plays football at Toledo
- » Cousin, Pro Wells, played football at TCU
- » Plans to design and build cars following his playing career
- » Majoring in general studies

### CAREER HIGHS

Tackles: 1 vs Iowa 12/05/20

### DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2020	ILL	8	6	17	23	1.5-11	0	1	0	0	1.5	0
2021	ILL	12	20	31	51	3.5-31	0	0	0	0	3.5	0
TOTAL		20	26	48	74	5-42	0	1	0	0	5	0

## 23 TAHVEON NICHOLSON

DB, 5-11, 180, SO.  
JACKSONVILLE, FLA. / LEE HS / PALMETTO PREP

### 2021 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » 11 tackles and two pass breakups in eight games played, including two starts

### 2020 Freshman:

- » Did not play in a game and redshirted the season

### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals
- » National prep school ranks: #7 (247 Composite), #8 (247)
- » No. 1 prep school athlete in the nation by 247 Composite
- » Four interceptions and one forced fumble at Palmetto Prep Academy
- » Also played wide receiver for Palmetto Prep Academy
- » Enrolled at Palmetto Prep Academy after high school career at Lee HS
- » Five interceptions and one forced fumble during his high school career
- » 28 touchdowns during his high school career, including two interception returns and one punt return
- » Offers included Florida Atlantic

### Personal:

- » Born Jan. 31, 2000
- » Majoring in general studies

### CAREER HIGHS

Tackles: 4 at Purdue 09/25/21

### DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2021	ILL	8	9	2	11	0-0	2	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		8	9	2	11	0-0	2	0	0	0	0	0

## 39 KENENNA ODELUGA

LB, 6-1, 230, R-FR.  
SOUTH HOLLAND, ILL. / MOUNT CARMEL

### 2021 Freshman:

- » Played in three games and redshirted the season

### High School:

- » State ranks: #81 (247)
- » Team went undefeated and won 7A State Championship in 2019
- » Help Mount Carmel win back-to-back CCL Blue Division titles
- » Two-time CCL-Blue Division All-Conference Team
- » 2020-2021 Sun-Times All-Area Team
- » Graduated high honors with distinction
- » Won the Mount Carmel Zealotus Award

### Personal:

- » Born March 31, 2001
- » Son of Kanayo and Chinyere Odeluga
- » Has four younger sisters
- » Cousin, Abuchi Obinwa, plays professional soccer for FC Tulsa of the USL
- » Chose Illinois because, "It felt like home. The coaches treated me with respect, love, and patience at every turn. My family is able to come watch my games every Saturday which is also a boost."
- » Majoring in business

## 65 JOEY OKLA

**OL, 6-2, 325, FR.****HARTLAND, WIS. / ARROWHEAD****High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #21 (Rivals), #58 (ESPN), #61 (247), #90 (On3)
- » State ranks: #7 (Rivals), #11 (ESPN), #14 (247), #16 (On3)
- » Played for head coach Matthew Harris at Arrowhead
- » Three-year letterwinner
- » 2021 Wisconsin Football Coaches Association Large School All-State
- » 2021 AP All-State first team
- » Also threw shot put and discus in high school
- » High Honor Roll
- » Offers included Eastern Illinois

**Personal:**

- » Born October 6, 2003
- » Son of Mike and Connie Okla
- » One sister, Kayla
- » Sister, Kayla, rowed at Wisconsin for two years
- » Chose Illinois, "because of the family feel and the great academics."
- » Plans to major in business

## 63 ALEX PALCZEWSKI

**OL, 6-6, 315, SR.****MOUNT PROSPECT, ILL. / PROSPECT****2022 Senior:**

- » Enters the season with 52 career starts, 36 at tackle and 16 at guard
- » Athlon Preseason All-Big Ten third team

**2021 Senior:**

- » All-Big Ten honorable mention (coaches and media)
- » Started all 12 games, seven at tackle and five at guard
- » No. 35 rated tackle in the nation by PFF
- » No. 13 rated run blocking tackle in the nation by PFF
- » Athlon Preseason All-Big Ten third team

**2020 Senior:**

- » Started four games at right tackle
- » Missed last four games due to injury
- » Finished the season with 40 career starts, eight away from tying the Illinois record (Nathan Scheelhaase, QB, 2010-13; Ryan McDonald, C, 2005-08; Tim Simpson, OL, 1988-91)
- » 40 career starts is tied for the most among current Illini (Vederian Lowe)
- » Phil Steele Preseason All-Big Ten third team
- » Athlon Preseason All-Big Ten third team
- » Outland Trophy watch list

**2019 Junior:**

- » Started all 13 games at right tackle
- » Ended the season with 36 straight starts
- » All-Big Ten third team (coaches)
- » All-Big Ten honorable mention (media)

**2018 Sophomore:**

- » All-Big Ten honorable mention (media)
- » Pro Football Focus All-Big Ten first team
- » Started all 12 games at right tackle
- » 23 straight starts
- » No. 30 rated tackle in the nation by PFF
- » No. 4 rated tackle in the Big Ten by PFF
- » No. 9 rated run-blocking tackle in the nation by PFF
- » Part of an OL that paved the way for the most-improved running game in the nation (+137.4 ypg from 2017 to '18), finishing 12th in FBS and second in the Big Ten at 243.0 ypg.
- » PFF National Team of the Week 11/11/18

- » Academic All-Big Ten

**2017 Freshman:**

- » BTN.com All-Freshman Team honorable mention
- » Started the final 11 games at guard
- » Teamed with Vederian Lowe and Larry Boyd to be Illinois' first ever true-freshmen trio to start the same game on the offensive line
- » Missed the opener with an injury

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by Rivals and Scout
- » Ranked No. 45 offensive tackle in the nation by Scout and No. 120 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 12 recruit in Illinois by Scout and No. 39 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 2 offensive tackle in Illinois by Scout
- » Mid-Suburban League East All-Conference
- » Played for football coach Mike Sebestyen
- » Also wrestled (4 years), played water polo (2 years) and was on the track and field team (2 years) in high school

**Personal:**

- » Born Aug. 3, 1999
- » Son of Andrzej and Bozena Palczewski
- » Has two older brothers, Adam and Alan
- » Picked Illinois because, "It is the flagship of my hometown state, and I want to play for where I grew up."
- » Graduated with a bachelor's degree in kinesiology in December 2021

## 98 DEON PATE

**OLB, 6-2, 265, SR.****JACKSONVILLE, FLA. / TRINITY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY****2021 Junior:**

- » Played in four games
- » Illinois victory team MVP against Nebraska 8/28/21

**2020 Junior:**

- » Played in all eight games at defensive line
- » Three tackles on the season

**2019 Sophomore:**

- » Played in nine games at defensive tackle
- » Seven tackles on the season

**2018 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Played eight games with one start
- » First career start against Iowa 11/17/18
- » Made his Illinois debut at Rutgers 10/6/18

**2017 Freshman:**

- » Redshirted the 2017 season

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, Rivals and ESPN
- » Ranked No. 56 strong-side defensive end by 247Sports and No. 107 by ESPN
- » Ranked No. 165 recruit in Florida by 247Sports
- » Played at Trinity Christian Academy for head coach Verlon Dorminey
- » Lettered three years in football
- » Trinity Christian Academy won four straight state titles during his high school career
- » 32 TFLs and 15 sacks a senior
- » 2016 all-county first team
- » 2016 Florida 3A all-state second team
- » Honor Roll for three years

**Personal:**

- » Born Feb. 14, 1998
- » Son of Melinda and Deon Pate Sr.
- » Father, Deon Sr., was a member of the Chicago Bulls practice team

- » Has one brother, Dylan Pate

- » Picked Illinois because, "it was the best fit for me and I love the vision that the coaches have for the program."
- » Wants to go into law enforcement following his playing career
- » Majoring in sociology

**CAREER HIGHS****Tackles: 3 vs Eastern Mich. 09/14/19****DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2018	ILL	8	0	3	3	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019	ILL	9	2	5	7	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	ILL	7	1	2	3	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	4	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		28	3	10	13	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 54 JULIAN PEARL

**OL, 6-6, 315, SO.****DANVILLE, ILL. / DANVILLE****2021 Sophomore:**

- » Played in 12 games with 10 starts

**2020 Sophomore:**

- » Played seven games and started three at right tackle
- » First career start at Nebraska 11/21/20

**2019 Freshman:**

- » Played in three games as a backup lineman
- » Made Illinois debut in the season opener against Akron

**2018 Freshman:**

- » Redshirted 2018 season (Did not play)

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and ESPN
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Ranked No. 531 recruit in the nation by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 41 OT in the nation by 247Sports and No. 107 by ESPN
- » Ranked No. 7 recruit in Illinois by 247Sports and No. 28 by ESPN
- » Played for head coach Marcus Forrest at Danville
- » 2017 USA Today All-USA Illinois second team
- » 2017 IHSFCA 6A All-State honorable mention
- » 2017 All-Big 12 first team
- » 2017 Champaign News-Gazette All-Area
- » Led Danville to back-to-back IHSA playoff berths
- » High school teammate of fellow Illini Caleb Griffin
- » Also played basketball in high school
- » Verbally committed to Illinois in April 2017
- » Also offered by Northern Illinois

**Personal:**

- » Born Oct. 6, 1999
- » Son of Ronique Heard
- » Two older brothers, Tayvian Johnson and Avery Pearl, and one younger sister, Dasia Middlebrooks
- » Brother, Tayvian Johnson, played Division III football
- » Brother, Avery, played Division III basketball
- » Picked Illinois because, "it would give me a chance to represent and improve my hometown and state."
- » Majoring in sociology

## 75 ALEX PIHLSTROM

**OL, 6-6, 305, SR.****GLEN ELLYN, ILL. / GLENBARD WEST****2021 Junior:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Played in all 12 games with five starts

**2020 Junior:**

- » Played in all eight games and started two at left guard
- » Made first career start at left guard against Purdue 10/31/20

- » Awarded with a scholarship by head coach Lovie Smith after practice 11/5/20

#### 2019 Sophomore:

- » Played in one game at tight end
- » Made Illinois debut against Rutgers

#### 2018 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Member of Illinois team
- » Academic All-Big Ten

#### 2017 Freshman:

- » Walk-on redshirted the 2017 season

#### High School:

- » Two-year letterwinner
- » Played for coach Chad Hetlet
- » 2016 All-West Suburban Silver
- » 2016 Academic All-State
- » 2016 Academic All-Conference
- » Helped Glenbard West to a state title in 2015
- » Also played basketball and tennis in high school

#### Personal:

- » Born April 28, 1999
- » Son of Mike Pihlstrom and Kim Noble
- » Two younger sisters, Kate and Megan
- » Father played football at Minnesota from 1984-88
- » Chose Illinois because, "I was looking for a bigger school to try and compete and I believed I could compete in the Big Ten."
- » Graduated with a degree in recreation, sport and tourism
- » Enrolled in the strategic brand communication master's program

## 80 FABRIZIO PINTON

K/P, 6-3, 230, R-FR.

HOUSTON, TEXAS / THE WOODLANDS

#### High School:

- » Played for head coach Jim Rapp at The Woodlands
- » Three-year letterwinner
- » Two-time All-County Special Teams MVP
- » Two-time all-district, all-conference, all-region, and all-area first team
- » 2019-20 all-state second team
- » Three-time 6A All District Athletics Academy Award
- » Two-time Houston area UIL Special Teams Player of the Year
- » The Woodlands record holder for career field goals and second in history in career extra points
- » Three-time USA National Team (International Bowl) starter as a kicker and punter
- » All-district academic team
- » Also played basketball in high school

#### Personal:

- » Born November 29, 2001
- » Son of Dino and Martha Pinton
- » One sister, Bella
- » Sister, Bella, played volleyball at the University of Chicago
- » Chose Illinois to, "pursue my dream of playing Big Ten football and to major in public policy and law."
- » Plans to work as a consultant or directly with major automotive companies following his playing career
- » Intends to major in business

## 19 EIAN PUGH

WR, 6-3, 170, FR.

NAPERVILLE, ILL. / FENWICK

#### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #62 (Rivals), #115 (247), #153 (ESPN)
- » State ranks: #9 (Rivals), #18 (247), #19 (ESPN)
- » Played for head coach Matt Battaglia at Fenwick

- » Three-year varsity starter
- » Led Fenwick to the 2021 IHSA 5A state championship
- » Also played basketball and ran track in high school
- » Offers included Ball State, Bowling Green, Cincinnati, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Toledo, and UNLV

#### Personal:

- » Born January 21, 2004
- » Son of Melanie and Gregory Pugh
- » One brother, Evan
- » Uncle, Deryk Gilmore, played football at Penn State and attended Illinois for his master's degree
- » Chose Illinois because, "The overall school and the connections I can make with the people here. Also, the coaching staff made me feel welcome. It was the best official visit I had, so it was a no-brainer when the time came."
- » Plans to major in business

## 88 KEITH RANDOLPH JR.

DL, 6-5, 305, SO.

BELLEVILLE, ILL. / BELLEVILLE WEST

#### 2022 Sophomore:

- » Athlon Preseason All-Big Ten third team

#### 2021 Redshirt Freshman:

- » All-Big Ten honorable mention (media)
- » Played in 10 games with seven starts
- » 42 tackles, 5.5 TFLs, 4.0 sacks, one interception, one pass breakup, and one forced fumble on the season
- » Only DT in the Big Ten with an interception in 2021
- » Second on the team with 4.0 sacks
- » Fifth on the team and first among defensive linemen with 5.5 TFLs
- » Second on the team in sacks (4.0)
- » Four tackles and 1.0 sack in Illinois' road win over No. 20 Minnesota
- » First career interception vs. Charlotte 10/2/21
- » Recorded 1.0 sack vs. UTSA 9/4/21
- » First career sack, first career forced fumble, and 1.5 TFLs against Nebraska 8/28/21

#### 2020 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Played in five games
- » Eight tackles and one PBU on the season

#### 2019 Freshman:

- » Played in four games at defensive end and redshirted the season
- » Seven tackles, 0.5 TFL on the season

#### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, Rivals and ESPN
- » Ranked No. 587 recruit in the nation by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 36 strong side defensive end in the nation by Rivals and No. 43 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 141 defensive end by ESPN
- » Ranked No. 6 recruit in Illinois by Rivals, No. 6 by 247Sports and No. 20 by ESPN
- » Two-year letterwinner in football and three-year letterwinner in basketball
- » Did not start playing football until his junior year
- » Played for head coach Cameron Pettus at Belleville West
- » 2018 USA TODAY All-USA Illinois first team
- » 2018 Class 7A IHSFCA All-State
- » All-South Western Conference first team
- » 56 tackles, 9.0 TFLs and 7.0 sacks as a senior
- » Also played basketball in high school and led Belleville West to two state titles
- » Offers included Boise State, Florida State, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan State, Minnesota, Purdue, Rutgers, Syracuse, and Virginia

#### Personal:

- » Born Sept. 1, 2001
- » Son of Kimberly and Keith Randolph Sr.
- » Two brothers, Kaleb and Kaden
- » Nicknamed "OT"
- » Picked Illinois because it is, "close to home, greatest fit, family connection, and fantastic academic school."
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

#### CAREER HIGHS

Tackles: 9 vs Rutgers 10/30/21

Sacks: 1 4 times

Tackles For Loss: 2 vs Northwestern 11/27/21

Interceptions: 1 vs Charlotte 10/02/21

#### DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2019	ILL	4	3	4	7	0.5-2	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	ILL	5	4	4	8	0-0	1	0	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	10	21	21	42	5.5-13	1	1	0	0	4	1
TOTAL		19	28	29	57	6-15	2	1	0	0	4	1

## 89 TIP REIMAN

TE, 6-5, 260, SO.

RAPID CITY, S.D. / O'GORMAN HIGH SCHOOL

#### 2021 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Played in all 12 games with three starts
- » Three receptions for 43 yards on the season
- » #9 blocking grade among Big Ten tight ends, according to PFF (72.4)
- » Scored first career touchdown (pass from Brandon Peters) at Minnesota 11/6/21
- » Award scholarship by head coach Bret Bielema 9/8/21

#### 2020 Freshman:

- » Played in all eight games, primarily on special teams
- » Made Illinois debut at Wisconsin 10/23/20

#### High School:

- » State Champions 2019
- » Competed in track and field

#### Personal:

- » Born Sept. 17, 2001
- » Son of Scott and Karen
- » Two older sisters, McKenna and Kelly
- » Majoring in kinesiology
- » Wants to be strength and conditioning coach

#### CAREER HIGHS

Rushing Attempts: 24 at Purdue 09/25/21, at Penn St. 10/23/21

Rushing Yards: 156 at Purdue 09/25/21

Rushing Touchdowns: 1 vs Maryland 09/17/21, vs Northwestern 11/27/21

Longest Rush: 38 vs Maryland 09/17/21, at Purdue 09/25/21

Receptions: 1 vs Maryland 09/17/21, at Iowa 11/20/21

Receiving Yards: 40 vs Maryland 09/17/21

Longest Reception: 40 vs Maryland 09/17/21

#### RECEIVING STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2020	ILL	8	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2021	ILL	12	3	43	1	24	0.3	14.3	3.6
TOTAL		20	3	43	1	24	0.2	14.3	2.2

## 19 HUGH ROBERTSON

P, 6-2, 225, R-FR.

CASTLEMAINE, AUSTRALIA / ASSUMPTION COLLEGE KILMORE

#### 2021 Redshirt Freshman:

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Redshirted the season

#### 2020 Freshman:

- » Played in one game
- » Made Illinois debut at Penn State 12/19
- » One punt for 38 yards on the season
- » Eighth oldest player on a college football roster in 2020

- » Second oldest freshman on a college football roster in 2020, behind fellow Australian Luke Larson of East Carolina (28 years old)

**High School:**

- » Graduated from high school in 2011

**Personal:**

- » Born Jan. 16, 1993
- » ProKick Australia product
- » Son of Peter and Judith Robertson
- » Two sisters, Alexandra and Amelia
- » Played Australian Rules Football
- » 2019 Bendigo Football League Senior Premiership playing for the Strathfieldsaye Football Netball Club
- » 2009 Essendon District Football League Premiership playing for Strathmore Football Club
- » Former Australian police officer
- » Former member of the Australian Army
- » Chose Illinois because, "I chose Illinois because the staff made me feel like family at the school and because Blake Hayes spoke so highly of the place."
- » Would like to work in the finance industry after his playing career
- » Majoring in finance

**CAREER HIGHS**

Punts: 1 at Penn St. 12/19/20

Longest Punt: 38 at Penn St. 12/19/20

**PUNTING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	NO	YDS	LG	AVG/G
2020	ILL	1	1	38	38	38.0
2021	ILL	0	0	0	0	0.0
TOTAL		1	1	38	38	38.0

## 24 TYSON ROOKS

DB, 6-4, 190, FR.

ST. SIMONS ISLAND, GA. / GLYNN ACADEMY

**High School:**

- » Played for head coach Rocky Hildago at Glynn Academy
- » Played one year of high school football
- » All-region first team
- » Also played tennis, basketball, and track in high school
- » Two-time all-region in basketball
- » Finished sixth in the state in the high jump
- » All A Honor Roll
- » Offers included Air Force, Chattanooga, Dartmouth, Florida Atlantic, Georgia Southern, Mercer, Minnesota, Navy, and Penn

**Personal:**

- » Born May 30, 2004
- » Son of Burnett and Zalynia Rooks
- » One brother, John, and one sister, Morgan
- » Cousin, Desmond Clark, was a tight end for the Chicago Bears and Denver Broncos
- » Cousin, Tracey Walker III, is a safety for the Detroit Lions
- » Cousin, Dominique Davis, is a quarterback for the CFL's Montreal Alouettes
- » Chose Illinois because, "It's something different from my hometown. There is a great relationship between the coaches and I. During my whole visit I felt like I was a part of the famILLy."
- » Plans to major in sports management

## 28 DYLAN ROSIEK

LB, 6-1, 225, R-FR.

EAST LAKE, FLA. / EAST LAKE

**2021 Freshman:**

- » Played in three games
- » Illinois victory team MVP against Nebraska 8/28/21

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and ESPN
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Position ranks: #51 (ESPN), #64 (247)
- » State ranks: #188 (247), #215 (ESPN)
- » Voted team MVP as a junior
- » 2018 ATH All-State third team
- » Also wrestled in high school
- » Committed to Illinois on June 17, 2020
- » Offers included Air Force, Army, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, and Yale

**Personal:**

- » Born Nov. 11, 2002
- » Chose Illinois because "I felt that this would put me in the best place to succeed and achieve my dream of playing at the next level."
- » Majoring in kinesiology

## 36 BEN SCHULTZ

OLB, 6-3, 230, SO.

CHAMPAIGN, ILL. / CENTRAL

**2021 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » Did not play in a game
- » Switched to outside linebacker following 2021 spring practices

**2020 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game

**2019 Freshman:**

- » Redshirted the 2019 season

**High School:**

- » Played for head coach Tim Turner at Champaign Central
- » Three-year letterwinner
- » Helped Central to the state playoffs as a senior
- » Also participated in track and field in high school and played basketball for one year
- » Sectional champion and ninth at the state meet in long jump
- » National Honor Society and Honor Roll

**Personal:**

- » Born Jan. 6, 2001
- » Son of Rob and Juli Schultz
- » One brother, Grey, and one sister, Kendall
- » Brother, Grey, played baseball at Illinois
- » Picked Illinois because, "I have lived in Champaign my whole life. I love the environment and the university."
- » Majoring in agribusiness markets and management

## 85 MILES SCOTT

WR, 5-11, 200, R-FR.

DOLTON, ILL. / THORNTON FRACTIONAL NORTH

**2021 Freshman:**

- » Played in four games with one start and redshirted the season

**High School:**

- » CCL All-Conference
- » Also competed in track for two years

**Personal:**

- » Born March 28, 2002
- » Son of Gerald and Arnita Scott
- » Chose Illinois because of the "outstanding staff, great culture, great education, and it's close to home."
- » Majoring in kinesiology

## 14 XAVIER SCOTT

DB, 5-11, 185, FR.

RIVIERA BEACH, FLA. / DWYER

**High School:**

- » Played for head coach McKinley Rolle at Dwyer
- » Also played basketball in high school
- » 2020 6A-7A All-County first team in basketball

**Personal:**

- » Born December 19, 2002
- » Son of Xavier Scott and Latoya Bush
- » Two brothers, Xanai Scott and Derian Williams
- » Chose Illinois because, "I saw the brotherhood here. The players and coaches were very welcoming and I saw that they had great intentions for me."
- » Majoring in business

## 15 JAMESON SHEEHAN

QB, 6-4, 205, FR.

CARY, ILL. / CARY-GROVE

**High School:**

- » Played for head coach Brad Seaburg at Cary-Grove
- » Helped Cary-Grove win a state championship in 2021
- » Helped Cary-Grove to a Fox Valley Conference championship in 2021
- » 2021 all-state
- » 2021 All-Fox Valley Conference
- » 2021 all-area
- » Also played baseball in high school and basketball for one year

**Personal:**

- » Born October 17, 2003
- » Son of John and Paula Sheehan
- » Two sisters, Kailyn and McKenna
- » Sister, Kailyn, played soccer at Florida Gulf Coast
- » Sister, McKenna, plays soccer at Missouri
- » Majoring in health science
- » Plans to work in physical therapy following his playing career

## 9 ARTUR SITKOWSKI

QB, 6-5, 225, JR.

OLD BRIDGE, N.J. / OLD BRIDGE/IMG ACADEMY / RUTGERS

**2021 Sophomore:**

- » 74-of-148 passing for 704 yards and six touchdowns on the season
- » Threw 4.5 passing touchdowns per interception (9 passing touchdowns/2 interceptions) from 2020-21, the eighth-best among Power 5 quarterbacks over the two-year stretch
- » Threw only two interceptions on 229 attempts (1 INT per 114.5 attempts) from 2020-21, the third-best among Power 5 quarterbacks over the two-year stretch (average: 39.7)
- » Led Illinois to a 20-18 win at #7 Penn State in the longest game in college football history (9 OT)
- » Threw for 221 yards and a touchdown against Virginia 9/11/21
- » Threw for 266 yards and three touchdowns against UTSA 9/4/21
- » Big Ten Offensive Player of the Week following 12-of-15 passing for 124 yards and two touchdowns against Nebraska 8/28/21
- » Illinois team offensive MVP against Nebraska 8/28/21
- » Injured against Penn State and missed the last four games of the season

**2020 Sophomore (Rutgers):**

- » Played in four games with two starts at quarterback
- » Academic All-Big Ten

- » Completed 52-of-81 passes for 444 yards and three touchdowns
- » Recorded 122 passing yards on 10 completions in start vs. Nebraska 12/18/20
- » Completed 14-of-20 passes for 108 yards and a touchdown in win at Maryland 12/12/20, including leading an 11-play drive over 61 yards to setup a game-tying field goal at the end of the fourth quarter
- » Started in the win at Purdue 11/28/20 and went 19-for-28 passing for 152 yards and two touchdowns
- » Went 9-for-13 passing for 62 yards in season debut at No. 3 Ohio State 11/7/20

**2019 Sophomore (Rutgers):**

- » Played in three games with two starts at quarterback
- » Went 44-for-68 passing for 429 yards and a touchdown
- » Completed first seven passes and finished 17-of-24 at No. 20 Michigan 9/28/19
- » Started against Boston College 9/21/19 and went 23-for-33 for a season-high 304 passing yards and one touchdown
- » Made season debut in the second half at No. 20 Iowa 9/7/19

**2018 Freshman (Rutgers):**

- » Started 11 games at quarterback
- » Went 134-for-273 passing for 1,158 yards and four touchdowns
- » Had three games with 200 or more passing yards
- » One of three true freshmen in Rutgers history to start 11 games at quarterback in a season (Tom Savage, Ryan Cubit)
- » The 134 completions ranked second in a season among RU true freshman quarterbacks all-time and 1,158 passing yards ranked sixth
- » Had eight completions vs. No. 4 Michigan 11/10/18
- » Finished 20-for-39 for 261 yards and a touchdown at Wisconsin 11/3/18
- » Connected on 29 passes on 46 attempts for a season-high 267 yards with a touchdown vs. Illinois 10/6/18
- » Went 18-for-35 with a touchdown pass against Indiana 9/29/18
- » Made the start in season opener against Texas State 9/1/18 and completed 20-of-30 passes to eight different receivers for 205 yards and one touchdown in the win
- » Became 11th Rutgers true freshman quarterback to start a game since WWII and third to start the season opener

**High School:**

- » Four-star recruit and rated the nation's No. 9 pro-style quarterback by ESPN.com
- » Coached by Kevin Wright at IMG Academy his senior year
- » Played at Old Bridge High School in New Jersey until his junior season
- » Helped IMG Academy to 9-0 record
- » Completed 45-of-79 passes for 370 yards and two touchdowns as a senior in seven games and rushed for two touchdowns
- » Went 6-5 as a junior at Old Bridge, playing for head coach Anthony Lanzafama
- » Completed 107-of-213 passes for 1,190 yards and five touchdowns his junior season
- » Scored nine rushing touchdowns, totaling 254 rushing yards as a junior
- » All-GMC Red Division by NJ.com and Gannett NJ  
Threw for 1,436 yards and 16 touchdowns as a sophomore

**Personal:**

- » Born May 16, 2000
- » Son of Rafal and Bogusia
- » Has one brother, Aleks
- » Chose Illinois because, "I believed in Coach B's vision for Illinios football as well as the people in the building."
- » Majoring in communication

**CAREER HIGHS**

Rushing Attempts: 10 at Penn St. 10/23/21

Rushing Yards: 33 vs UTSA 09/04/21  
 Longest Rush: 14 at Maryland 12/12/20, vs UTSA 09/04/21  
 Passing Attempts: 46 vs Illinois 10/06/18  
 Completions: 29 vs Illinois 10/06/18  
 Passing Yards: 304 vs Boston College 09/21/19  
 Passing Touchdowns: 3 vs UTSA 09/04/21  
 Longest Pass: 74 vs Boston College 09/21/19

**PASSING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	COMP	ATT	INT	YDS	TD	LG	PCT	AVG/P	AVG/G	EFF
2018	RUT	11	134	273	18	1158	4	41	49.1	8.6	105.3	76.4
2019	RUT	3	44	68	2	429	1	74	64.7	9.8	143.0	116.7
2020	RUT	4	52	81	0	444	3	50	64.2	8.5	111.0	122.5
2021	ILL	5	74	148	2	704	6	45	50.0	9.5	140.8	100.6
ILL TOTAL		5	74	148	2	704	6	45	50.0	9.5	140.8	100.6
TOTAL		23	304	570	22	2735	14	74	53.3	9.0	118.9	94.0

**RUSHING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	ATT	YDS	TD	LG	AVG/C	AVG/G
2018	RUT	11	22	-66	0	12	-3.0	-6.0
2019	RUT	3	8	-7	0	3	-0.9	-2.3
2020	RUT	4	14	2	0	14	0.1	0.5
2021	ILL	5	26	31	0	14	1.2	6.2
ILL TOTAL		5	26	31	0	14	1.2	6.2
TOTAL		23	70	-40	0	14	-0.6	-1.7

## 66 JORDYN SLAUGHTER

OL, 6-5, 325, JR.  
 BELLEVILLE, ILL. / ALTHOFF CATHOLIC

**2021 Sophomore:**

- » Missed the season with an injury

**2020 Sophomore:**

- » Played in five games and started one at left guard

**2019 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Played in one game as a backup lineman
- » Made Illinois debut in the season opener against Akron

**2018 Freshman:**

- » Redshirted the 2018 season (Did not play)

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN and Rivals
- » Ranked No. 75 offensive tackle in the nation by ESPN and No. 83 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 20 recruit in Illinois by 247Sports, No. 22 by Rivals and No. 25 by ESPN
- » Played for head coach Ken Turner at Althoff Catholic
- » Led Althoff Catholic to the second round of the 2017 IHSA football playoffs
- » All-city and all-conference selection
- » Honor Roll as a senior
- » Also played basketball in high school
- » Verbally committed to Illinois in June 2017
- » Offers included Vanderbilt, Bowling Green and Toledo

**Personal:**

- » Born Aug. 7, 2000
- » Son of Vernon and Ja'Nerra Slaughter
- » One younger sister, Jade
- » Picked Illinois because he, "wanted to play for my state."
- » Majoring in sociology

## 7 KENDALL SMITH

DB, 6-1, 205, SR.  
 BOLINGBROOK, ILL. / BOLINGBROOK

**2021 Junior:**

- » Primarily played on special teams
- » 13 tackles on the season
- » Started at safety in Illinois' 47-14 season-ending win over Northwestern 11/27/21
- » Illinois Special Teams Player of the Week in the win at Minnesota 11/6/21

**2020 Junior:**

- » Played in all eight games, primarily on special teams
- » Seven tackles, one PBU on the season

- » Made season debut at defensive back at Northwestern 12/12/20

**2019 Junior:**

- » Played in two games, primarily on special teams

**2018 Sophomore:**

- » Played 10 games, primarily on special teams
- » Former wide receiver moved to safety
- » 10 tackles and one forced fumble on season
- » Career-high three tackles at Maryland 10/27/18
- » First career forced fumble against Western Illinois 9/8/18

**2017 Freshman:**

- » Wide receiver played in all 12 games, primarily on special teams
- » Made one special teams tackle on the season
- » Made Illinois debut in the opener against Ball State

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, Rivals, ESPN and Scout
- » Ranked No. 100 wide receiver in the nation by Rivals, No. 118 by ESPN, No. 123 by Scout
- » Ranked No. 9 recruit in Illinois by ESPN, No. 15 by Rivals, No. 19 by 247Sports
- » Played at Bolingbrook High School for head coach John Ivlow
- » 2016 Illinois High School Football Coaches Association all-state honorable mention

**Personal:**

- » Born Jan. 3, 1999
- » Son of Vonetta Wade
- » Has two sisters, Sierra and Madison
- » Picked Illinois because, "it was always a favorite school of mine and I want to be a part of the change."
- » Majoring in learning and education studies

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 4 vs Iowa 12/05/20

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2017	ILL	12	0	1	1	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2018	ILL	10	6	4	10	0-0	0	1	0	0	0	0
2019	ILL	2	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	ILL	8	3	4	7	0-0	1	0	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	12	8	5	13	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		44	17	14	31	0-0	1	1	0	0	0	0

## 3 DD SNYDER II

DB, 6-0, 180, R- FR.  
 TAMPA, FLA. / TAMPA CATHOLIC

**2021 Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game and redshirted the season

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #59 (ESPN), #148 (247)
- » State ranks: #120 (ESPN), #229 (247)
- » 2019 Defensive Coaches Award
- » 2019 Best Defensive Back
- » 2018 Coaches Award
- » 43 tackles, 3.0 TFL, four interceptions, 78 interception return yards, two pass deflections, and two fumble recoveries as a senior
- » 55 tackles, five interceptions, three fumble recoveries, and six pass deflections during his high school career
- » Committed to Illinois on July 6, 2020
- » Offers included Bowling Green, Buffalo, Coastal Carolina, Duke, Florida Atlantic, Indiana, NC State, UCF, USF, and Washington State

**Personal:**

- » Born December 3, 2002
- » Chose Illinois because "I feel like it's a place I'm ready to call home."
- » Majoring in general studies

## 20 TYLER STRAIN

DB, 5-9, 180, R-FR.

PACE, FLA. / PACE

### 2021 Freshman:

- » Played in four games and redshirted the season
- » Two tackles in four games played

### High School:

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and ESPN
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Position ranks: #114 (ESPN), #122 (247)
- » State ranks: #173 (247), #188 (ESPN)
- » 109 tackles, 3.0 TFL, three interceptions, nine pass deflections, two forced fumbles and two fumble recoveries during his high school career
- » 27 rush attempts, 339 rushing yards, 18 receptions for 401 yards, one receiving touchdown and three rushing touchdowns during his high school career
- » Also competed in track and field in high school
- » Committed to Illinois on July 24, 2020
- » Offers included South Alabama, Tulane, and USF

### Personal:

- » Born March 25, 2003
- » Son of Melvin and Penny
- » Has one brother, Jermey, and one sister, Desiree
- » Chose Illinois because, "I felt home."
- » Majoring in general studies

### CAREER HIGHS

Tackles: 1 at Virginia 09/11/21, at Iowa 11/20/21

### DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2021	ILL	4	1	1	2	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		4	1	1	2	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 4 KHMARI THOMPSON

WR, 6-1, 210, JR.

LAWRENCEVILLE, GA. / CENTRAL GWINNETT / MISSOURI

### 2020 Junior:

- » Played in six games, primarily on special teams
- » Illinois EMPOWER Membership Director

### 2020 Sophomore:

- » Played in five games, primarily on special teams as kick off returner
- » 12 returns for 234 yards on the season
- » Made Illinois debut at Wisconsin 10/23/20

### 2019 Redshirt Freshman (Missouri):

- » Did not play in a game
- » Also ran track and finished fourth in the 200-meter dash at the Mizzou Open 1/25/19, setting a personal record
- » Ran in the 4x100-meter relay at the SEC Championships 5/11/19, finishing in seventh place and contributing to a relay personal record of 40.74

### 2018 Freshman (Missouri):

- » Played in three games and redshirted
- » Played against UT-Martin, Wyoming, and Tennessee

### High School:

- » Three-star wide receiver by Rivals and 247Sports.com
- » Played for head coach Todd Wofford at Central Gwinnett
- » Did not play high school football as a sophomore or junior to focus on track
- » 83 receptions for 1,131 receiving yards and 12 touchdowns as a senior
- » Offers included Kansas State, Missouri, Purdue, Tulane, and Georgia Southern

### Personal:

- » Born Aug. 3, 2000

- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

### CAREER HIGHS

Longest Kick Return: 35 vs Purdue 10/31/20

### RECEIVING STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2018	MIZ	4	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2020	ILL	5	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2021	ILL	6	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
ILL TOTAL		11	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL		15	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

### ALL-PURPOSE STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	RUSH	RCV	PR	KR	IR	TOTAL	AVG/G
2018	MIZ	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
2020	ILL	5	0	0	0	234	0	234	46.8
2021	ILL	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
ILL TOTAL		11	0	0	0	234	0	234	21.3
TOTAL		15	0	0	0	234	0	234	15.6

## 62 SAM TSAGALIS

OL, 6-2, 275, FR.

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, ILL. / PROSPECT

### High School:

- » Played for head coach Dan Deboeuf at Prospect
- » Lettered three years in football in high school
- » 2021 and 2022 All-Mid Suburban League East
- » Helped Prospect to Mid Suburban League championships in 2021 and 2022
- » 7A state semifinalists in 2022
- » Also competed in basketball and track and field in high school
- » Academic All-Mid Suburban League East
- » Academic all-area
- » High Honor Roll
- » College Board AP Scholar

### Personal:

- » Born March 4, 2004
- » Son of Bill and Yvonne Tsagalidis
- » One brother, JJ
- » Majoring in business
- » Chose Illinois because, "I liked the coaching staff, family feel and the academics."
- » Plans to work with athletes as either a bioengineer or in orthopedics following his playing career

## 37 SOLO TURNER

DB, 6-2, 220, SO.

FRISCO, TEXAS / PRESTONWOOD CHRISTIAN / HAWAII

### 2021 Redshirt Freshman (Hawaii):

- » Played in all 13 games
- » Started the year at tight end but switched to safety
- » Played significant time on special teams
- » Finished the year with 25 tackles (20 solo)
- » Season-best nine tackles, 2.0 TFLs, 1.0 sack, and one forced fumble against Utah State in his first and only start of the season
- » Four tackles and a forced fumble against San Diego State
- » First career interception at UNLV

### 2019-20 Freshman (Baylor):

- » Spent two seasons at Baylor
- » Redshirted in 2019 and did not play in 2020

### High School:

- » Played at Prestonwood Christian Academy in Plano, Texas
- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, Rivals, and ESPN
- » Led Prestonwood Christian to two state titles
- » Played both ways on a team that finished 9-3 in 2018
- » 55 receptions for 1,285 yards and 19 touchdowns as a senior
- » 33 tackles with two interceptions
- » All-district first team at wide receiver and all-district second team at safety
- » TAAPS Most Outstanding Player

- » 23 catches for 394 yards and three touchdowns and 41 tackles as a junior

### Personal:

- » Born Sept. 20, 2000
- » Son of Scott and Robin Turner
- » Given first name is Solomon
- » Intends to major in communications
- » Father, Scott, played at Illinois from 1991-94 before being drafted in the seventh round of the 1995 NFL Draft and playing nine seasons for the Washington Redskins, San Diego Chargers, and Denver Broncos. He is a former Texas State Representative and worked as the Executive Director of the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council from 2019-2021

### CAREER HIGHS

Tackles: 9 at Utah State 10/30/21

Sacks: 1 at Utah State 10/30/21

Interceptions: 1 at UNLV 11/13/21

### DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2021	HAW	13	20	5	25	2-15	1	2	0	0	1	1
TOTAL		13	20	5	25	2-15	1	2	0	0	1	1

## 22 PEYTON VINING

DB, 6-2, 200, SR.

BRADENTON, FLA. / SAINT STEPHENS / DENISON

### 2021 Senior:

- » Played in two games and redshirted the season

### 2020 Senior (Denison):

- » Season was moved to spring and one game played
- » Six receptions for 90 yards and two touchdowns in the only game of the season
- » Six kick returns for 138 yards at Ohio Wesleyan (3/19/21)

### 2019 Junior (Denison):

- » Started all 10 games
- » First team All-NCAC at wide receiver
- » Second team All-NCAC as kick return specialist
- » Led Division III with 26.7 yards per reception
- » Led the NCAC with 936 receiving yards
- » Had three, 100-yard receiving games
- » Seven receiving touchdowns
- » Had at least one catch for over 30 yards in all 10 games
- » Career-high 139 yards receiving against Oberlin
- » Totaled 1,356 all-purpose yards on the season
- » Returned a kickoff 91 yards for a touchdown against Kenyon
- » Long reception was 81-yard go-ahead fourth quarter TD vs. Wittenberg

### 2018 Sophomore (Denison):

- » Missed the season

### 2017 Freshman (Denison):

- » Played in eight games with two starts on defense
- » Recorded 13 tackles and four pass breakups
- » Recorded interceptions against Southwestern and at Wittenberg, totaling 29 interception return yards

### Personal:

- » Born September 16, 1998
- » Played with Chase and Sydney Brown in high school
- » Son of Dana and Chris Vining
- » Brother, Cam, played football at the United States Military Academy at West Point
- » Brother, Fred Billy, played football at West Florida
- » Graduated with a degree in health exercise and sport studies from Denison in 2021
- » Enrolled in the recreation, sport and tourism master's program

### CAREER HIGHS

Rushing Attempts: 1 vs Hiram 09/21/19, vs DePauw 11/02/19

Rushing Yards: 12 vs Hiram 09/21/19

Rushing Touchdowns: 1 vs Hiram 09/21/19, vs DePauw 11/02/19

Longest Rush: 12 vs Hiram 09/21/19

Receptions: 6 at Ohio Wesleyan 03/19/21, vs DePauw 11/02/19  
 Receiving Yards: 139 vs Oberlin 10/12/19  
 Receptions Touchdowns: 2 at Ohio Wesleyan 03/19/21, vs Hiram 09/21/19  
 Longest Reception: 81 at Wittenberg 10/26/19  
 Longest Kick Return: 91 vs Kenyon 11/16/19  
 Tackles: 3 at Allegheny 09/16/17, vs Oberlin 09/23/17, at Wittenberg 09/30/17  
 Interceptions: 1 vs Southwestern (TX) 09/02/17, at Wittenberg 09/30/17

**RECEIVING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2017	DEN	2	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2019	DEN	10	35	936	7	81	3.5	26.7	93.6
2020	DEN	1	6	90	2	40	6.0	15.0	90.0
2021	ILL	2	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
ILL TOTAL		2	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL		21	41	1026	9	81	2.0	25.0	48.9

**ALL-PURPOSE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	RUSH	RCV	PR	KR	IR	TOTAL	AVG/G
2017	DEN	8	0	0	0	0	29	29	3.6
2019	DEN	10	13	936	0	407	0	1356	135.6
2020	DEN	1	0	90	0	138	0	228	228.0
2021	ILL	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
ILL TOTAL		2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
TOTAL		21	13	1026	0	545	29	1613	76.8

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2017	DEN	8	10	3	13	0-0	4	0	0	0	0	2
2019	DEN	10	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	DEN	1	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	2	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ILL TOTAL		2	0	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		21	10	3	13	0-0	4	0	0	0	0	2

## 14 CASEY WASHINGTON

**WR, 6-2, 200, JR.****ROUND ROCK, TEXAS / PFLUGERVILLE****2021 Sophomore:**

- » 21 receptions for 294 receiving yards on the season
- » Second on the team in receptions (21)
- » Caught the game-winning two-point conversion from Brandon Peters in Illinois' 20-18 win at #7 Penn State to end the longest game in college football history (9 OT)
- » Team-high 31 receiving yards on three catches against Purdue 9/25/21
- » 30 rushing yards on zero (0) attempts and a touchdown after recovering a fumble and taking it into the endzone against Maryland 9/17/21
- » Transferred to Wake Forest for spring practice before transferring back to Illinois in the summer

**2020 Sophomore:**

- » Played in all eight games and started one at wide receiver
- » 10 receptions for 106 yards on the season

**2019 Freshman:**

- » Played in 10 games and started five at wide receiver
- » 11 receptions for 132 yards on the season
- » Five starts was the sixth-most in Illinois history by a true freshman wide receiver
- » One reception for four yards at Michigan State 11/9/19 to help Illinois win 37-34 in the biggest comeback in program history
- » First career start in 24-6 win at Purdue 10/26/19
- » 18-yard reception on a fourth-quarter touchdown drive vs. No. 6 Wisconsin 10/19/19 to help Illinois win 24-23 and complete one of the biggest upsets in Big Ten history
- » First career catch against No. 16 Michigan 10/12/19

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports and ESPN
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals
- » Ranked No. 138 wide receiver in the nation by ESPN and No. 190 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 175 recruit in Texas by ESPN and No. 201 by 247Sports
- » 42 receptions for 565 yards and five touchdowns as a senior
- » Played for head coach Charles Taylor at Pflugerville
- » Verbally committed to Illinois in July 2018
- » Offers included Kansas, South Alabama, Tulane, and UTSA

**Personal:**

- » Born March 6, 2001
- » Son of Jennifer and Greg Washington
- » Father played football at Kansas State from 1987-89
- » One older sister, Loren
- » Sister, Loren, played volleyball at Texas A&M-Kingsville
- » Picked Illinois because of the, "solid degree, family environment, make an impact ASAP."
- » Majoring in recreation, sport and tourism
- » Plans to become a coach following his playing career

**CAREER HIGHS**

Rushing Yards: 30 vs Maryland 09/17/21  
 Rushing Touchdowns: 1 vs Maryland 09/17/21  
 Longest Rush: 30 vs Maryland 09/17/21  
 Pass Attempts: 2 at Penn St. 10/23/21  
 Receptions: 4 vs Northwestern 11/30/19  
 Receiving Yards: 68 vs Northwestern 11/27/21  
 Longest Reception: 56 vs Northwestern 11/27/21

**RECEIVING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2019	ILL	10	11	132	0	20	1.1	12.0	13.2
2020	ILL	8	10	106	0	20	1.3	10.6	13.3
2021	ILL	12	21	294	0	56	1.8	14.0	24.5
TOTAL		30	42	532	0	56	1.4	12.1	17.7

**RUSHING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	ATT	YDS	TD	LG	AVG/C	AVG/G
2019	ILL	10	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0
2020	ILL	8	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0
2021	ILL	12	0	30	1	30	0.0	2.5
TOTAL		30	0	30	1	30	0.0	1.0

## 71 HUNTER WHITENACK

**OL, 6-7, 345, FR.****NEW CARLISLE, IND. / NEW CARLISLE****High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports, ESPN, On3, and Rivals
- » Position ranks: #83 (On3), #117 (247), #125 (ESPN)
- » State ranks: #16 (On3), #16 (Rivals), #18 (247), #21 (ESPN)
- » Played for head coach Casey McKim at New Prairie
- » Three-time all-area, and all-conference
- » 2021 Indiana Football Coaches Association Top 50
- » 2019 Indiana Football Coaches Association 4A All-State Junior Team
- » 2018 Indiana Football Coaches Association 4A All-State Junior Team
- » Wrestled for over 15 years
- » New Prairie wrestling record holder for career pins, season pins and fastest pin, and two-time regional and sectional champion
- » Offers included Ball State, Central Michigan, Cincinnati, Illinois State, Tulane, UAB, and Western Michigan

**Personal:**

- » Born February 12, 2003
- » Son of Bobby and Jennifer Whitenack
- » One brother, Hayden
- » Father, Bobby, played college football at Manchester from 1999-2002
- » Chose Illinois because, "It's close to home and a great school. I'm going to be playing football there, as well as being a student, and the GIES College of Business is top 10 in the country."
- » Plans to major in business

## 94 RAASHAAN WILKINS JR.

**DL, 6-3, 315, JR.****CHICAGO, ILL. / MT. CARMEL / VANDERBILT****2021 Junior (Vanderbilt):**

- » Played 12 games with 10 starts
- » 13 tackles (five solo)

**2020 Junior (Vanderbilt):**

- » Started all nine games, one of six Commodores to do so
- » Eight tackles, 2.0 tackles for loss and a fumble recovery

- » Two tackles in Commodore debut at No. 10/11 Texas A&M
- » 2.0 tackles for loss and a fumble recovery against South Carolina

**2019 Sophomore (Monterey Peninsula):**

- » Played at Monterey Peninsula (Calif.) College in 2019
- » Starting defensive lineman
- » Helped Monterey Peninsula to 10-1 record, including victory in Living Breath Foundation Bowl
- » Part of Monterey Peninsula unit that paced conference with 48 quarterback sacks

**2018 Freshman (Wisconsin-Stevens Point):**

- » Played tight end at Wisconsin-Stevens Point
- » Caught two passes

**High School:**

- » Played for head coach Frank Lenti at Mt. Carmel
- » Helped Mt. Carmel to a 7A semifinals appearance as a senior
- » Two-way starter at tight end and defensive end
- » Six sacks as senior

**Personal:**

- » Son of Kristen Wilkins
- » Two brothers, Walter and Marcus

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 3 vs Eastern Mich. 09/14/19

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2020	VANDY	9	5	3	8	2-2	0	0	1	0	0	0
2021	VANDY	12	5	8	13	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		21	10	11	21	2-2	0	0	1	0	0	0

## 1 ISAIAH WILLIAMS

**WR, 5-10, 180, SO.****ST. LOUIS, MO. / TRINITY CATHOLIC****2022 Sophomore:**

- » Athlon Preseason All-Big Ten fourth team

**2021 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Academic All-Big Ten
- » 47 receptions for 525 yards and four receiving touchdowns
- » Also ran for 61 yards and two touchdowns on the season
- » Led Illinois in receptions (47) and receiving yards (525)
- » Third in the nation among Power-5 freshmen in receptions (47), behind only Texas' Xavier Worthy (62) and Georgia's Brock Bowers (56)
- » Tied for the team lead with five touchdowns (4 receiving, 1 rushing)
- » Tied for the team lead in receiving touchdowns (4)
- » 13th in the Big Ten in receptions (47)
- » 14th in the Big Ten in receptions per game (3.9)
- » 20th in the Big Ten in receiving yards per game (43.8)
- » Career highs in receptions (8) and receiving yards (101) against UTSA 9/4/21
- » Illinois team offensive MVP against Nebraska 8/28/21
- » Switched to wide receiver for the final two spring practices in 2021

**2020 Redshirt Freshman:**

- » Played in five games and started four at quarterback
- » 26-for-63 passing for 393 yards, four touchdowns on the season
- » 63 carries for 389 yards and one touchdown on the season
- » Finished the with the 389 rushing yards, the ninth most in a season by a quarterback in school history
- » Finished the season No. 10 in career rushing yards by a QB with 405 rushing yards
- » Set the Illinois single-game rushing record by a quarterback with 192 yards in his first career start Rutgers 11/14/20.
- » Rushed for 102 yards on 15 carries against Penn State 12/19/20

**2019 Freshman:**

- » Played in four games and redshirted the season
- » 3-of-10 passing for 38 yards, nine carries for 16 yards, and three receptions for nine yards on the season
- » Played wide receiver for the first time during the Redbox Bowl and had three receptions for nine yards
- » Made Illinois debut against Nebraska 9/21/19 on two designed quarterback runs

**High School:**

- » Four-star recruit by 247Sports, Rivals and ESPN
- » Ranked No. 47 recruit in the nation by Rivals, No. 93 by ESPN and No. 295 by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 5 athlete in the nation by 247Sports, No. 8 by ESPN and No. 16 by Rivals
- » Ranked No. 1 recruit in Missouri by Rivals and ESPN and No. 5 by 247Sports
- » No. 9 ranked recruit in Illinois' last 17 years according to 247Sports
- » Williams and Marquez Beason are Illinois' two highest ranked recruits since Terry Hawthorne in 2009 and the highest combo since Arrelious Benn and Martez Wilson in 2007
- » Illinois' highest ranked quarterback recruit since Juice Williams in 2006
- » Ranked as high as No. 25 overall recruit in the nation in February 2018 according to 247Sports Composite
- » Played for head coach Cory Patterson through his junior year when Patterson left Trinity Catholic to become the tight ends coach at Illinois
- » Played for head coach Terrence Curry at Trinity Catholic as a senior
- » 2019 Under Armour All-American selection
- » 2018 Elite 11 Finals invitation
- » 2018 and 2019 Missouri Gatorade Player of the Year
- » 2018 USA TODAY Missouri Offensive Player of the Year
- » 2018 USA TODAY All-USA Missouri first team
- » 2018 Missouri Football Coaches Association Class 3 All-State first team
- » 2,470 passing yards and 33 touchdowns as a senior
- » 1,132 rushing yards and 11 touchdowns as a senior
- » 1,898 passing yards and 29 touchdowns as a junior
- » Threw for 175 yards and four touchdowns and ran for 23 yards in the 2018 Missouri Class 4 state title game to help Trinity Catholic beat Cardinal Ritter
- » Also played basketball and ran track at Trinity Catholic
- » Verbally committed to Illinois in March 2018
- » Offers included Alabama, Auburn, Clemson, Florida, Florida State, Indiana, Iowa, Iowa State, Kansas State, Kentucky, Louisville, LSU, Maryland, Michigan, Michigan State, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, Northwestern, Notre Dame, Ohio State, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Ole Miss, Oregon, Penn State, Purdue, South Carolina, Stanford, Syracuse, TCU, Tennessee, Texas, Texas A&M, UCF, Virginia, and Wisconsin

**Personal:**

- » Born Jan. 29, 2001
- » Son of Ashley Harris and Wendell Williams
- » One brother, Wendell Williams Jr., and two sisters, Zariyah Martin and Keira Williams
- » Nicknamed "1"
- » Has worn No. 1 since he started playing sports
- » Picked Illinois because it is a, "prestigious university and family oriented."
- » Plans to open a training facility following his playing career
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism

**CAREER HIGHS**

Rushing Attempts: 31 at Rutgers 11/14/20  
 Rushing Yards: 192 at Rutgers 11/14/20  
 Rushing Touchdowns: 1 3 times  
 Longest Rush: 64 at Penn St. 12/19/20  
 Pass Attempts: 18 at Rutgers 11/14/20, at Penn St. 12/19/20  
 Completions: 8 at Penn St. 12/19/20  
 Passing Yards: 120 at Penn St. 12/19/20  
 Passing Touchdown: 2 at Penn St. 12/19/20  
 Longest Pass: 46 at Northwestern 12/12/20

Receptions: 8 vs UTSA 09/04/21  
 Receiving Yards: 113 vs Northwestern 11/27/21  
 Receiving Touchdowns: 1 4 times  
 Longest Reception: 52 vs Rutgers 10/30/21

**RECEIVING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	REC	YDS	TD	LG	REC/G	YDS/R	YDS/G
2019	ILL	4	3	9	0	4	0.8	3.0	2.3
2020	ILL	6	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2021	ILL	12	47	525	4	52	3.9	11.2	43.8
TOTAL		22	50	534	4	52	2.3	10.7	24.3

**RUSHING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	ATT	YDS	TD	LG	AVG/C	AVG/G
2019	ILL	4	9	16	0	5	1.8	4.0
2020	ILL	6	63	389	1	64	6.2	64.8
2021	ILL	12	12	61	2	21	5.1	5.1
TOTAL		22	84	466	3	64	5.5	21.2

**PASSING STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	COMP	ATT	INT	YDS	TD	LG	PCT	AVG/P	AVG/G	EFF
2019	ILL	4	3	10	1	38	0	25	30.0	12.7	9.5	41.9
2020	ILL	6	26	63	2	393	4	46	41.3	15.1	65.5	108.3
2021	ILL	12	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL		22	29	74	3	431	4	46	39.2	14.9	19.6	97.8

# 31 DEVON WITHERSPOON

**DB, 6-0, 180, JR.**  
**PENSACOLA, FLA. / PINE FOREST**

**2021 Sophomore:**

- » All-Big Ten honorable mention (media)
- » Played and started 10 games
- » 52 tackles, 8.0 TFLs, 1.0 sack, and nine pass breakups on the season
- » Led Illinois with nine pass breakups
- » Tied for second on the team with 8.0 TFLs
- » Fourth on the team with 42 solo tackles
- » Sixth on the team with 52 tackles
- » Ninth in the Big Ten in pass breakups (9) and fourth in the Big Ten West
- » Tied for fifth among Big Ten cornerbacks in defensive stops in 2021, according to PFF (19)
- » Six tackles, 2.0 TFLs, 1.0 sack and one quarterback hurry in the Illini's 90T upset win over #7 Penn State 10/23/21 in the longest game in college football history
- » Seven tackles including 1.0 TFLs against Maryland 9/17/21
- » Seven tackles, 1.0 TFL and one PBU against Virginia 9/11/21
- » Nine tackles, 2.0 TFLs and two PBUs against UTSA 9/4/21
- » Career-high four PBUs against Nebraska 8/28/21

**2020 Sophomore:**

- » Played in and started seven games at cornerback
- » Missed the season opener at Wisconsin with an injury
- » 33 tackles, 1.0 TFL, two interception, one forced fumble, three fumble recoveries on the season
- » First career interception against Minnesota 11/7/20

**2019 Freshman:**

- » Played in all 13 games and started three at cornerback
- » 33 tackles, two PBUs on the season
- » Led the team in special teams tackles (13)
- » Led the team in kickoff tackles (11)
- » Only true freshman defender to start a game for Illinois in 2019
- » Chase-down tackle at the goal line in the fourth quarter vs. No. 6 Wisconsin 10/19/19 led to goal-line stop to help Illinois win 24-23 and complete one of the biggest upsets in Big Ten history
- » Joined the Illini during training camp after initially planning to attend Hutchinson Community College (Kan.)

**High School:**

- » Two-year letterwinner in football
- » Played for head coach Jason McDonald at Pine Forest
- » Helped Pine Forest to the 2018 District 1-6A championship and advance to the second round of the state playoffs
- » 2018 Pensacola News Journal Defensive Player of the Year
- » 2018 Pensacola News Journal All-Area first team

- » 74 tackles, nine PBUs, 2.0 TFLs, 1.0 sack, and an area-high seven interceptions as a senior
- » Scored two touchdowns as a senior, one on a fumble return and one on an interception return
- » 65 tackles, nine PBUs, 2.0 TFLs, 1.0 sack, and four interceptions as a junior, his first year playing football
- » Also played basketball and ran track in high school, helping three Pine Forest teams to district titles as a senior
- » Standout high jumper and part of multiple championship relay teams, including a Florida Class 3A state runner-up finish in the 4x100-meter relay
- » 2018 Pensacola News Journal Male Athlete of the Year for overall production in all three sports
- » Verbally committed to Illinois in July 2019, four days before training camp
- » Offers included Appalachian State, Georgia State, Massachusetts, Middle Tennessee, South Alabama, Southern Miss, Troy, Temple, and UAB
- » Originally committed to Hutchinson Community College (Kan.)

**Personal:**

- » Born Dec. 11, 2000
- » Did not play football until his junior year of high school
- » Majoring in communication

**CAREER HIGHS**

Tackles: 9 vs Purdue 10/31/20, vs UTSA 09/04/21  
 Sacks: 1 at Penn St. 10/23/21  
 Tackles For Loss: 2 vs UTSA 09/04/21  
 Interceptions: 1 vs Minnesota 11/07/20, at Rutgers 11/14/20

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2019	ILL	13	23	10	33	0-0	2	0	0	0	0	0
2020	ILL	7	19	14	33	1-4	0	1	3	0	0	2
2021	ILL	10	42	10	52	7-22	9	0	0	0	1	0
TOTAL		30	84	34	118	8-26	11	1	3	0	1	2

# 91 JAMAL WOODS

**DL, 6-2, 290, SR.**  
**HUEYTOWN, ALA. / HUEYTOWN**

**2021 Senior:**

- » Played in 10 games with one start
- » 12 tackles and 2.0 TFLs on the season

**2020 Senior:**

- » Started three games at defensive tackle
- » Missed four games due to injury
- » Four tackles and 0.5 TFL on the season

**2019 Junior:**

- » Played in nine games and started four at defensive tackle
- » Missed four games with injuries
- » 14 tackles, 5.5 TFLs, 0.5 sack, one forced fumble on the season
- » Three tackles and 1.5 TFLs vs. No. 6 Wisconsin 10/19/19 to help Illinois win 24-23 and complete one of the biggest upsets in Big Ten history
- » First career forced fumble at UConn 9/7/19

**2018 Sophomore:**

- » Started first four games at defensive tackle before a season-ending injury
- » 13 tackles, 4.0 TFLs, 1.0 sack, three PBUs and one QB hurry on season
- » First career sack, five tackles, two PBUs and a QB hurry against Western Illinois 9/8/18
- » Season-high 2.0 TFLs against Kent State 9/1/18
- » At least 1.0 TFL in each of the first three games

**2017 Freshman:**

- » BTN.com All-Freshman Team honorable mention
- » Played in 11 games with four starts on the defensive line
- » 24 tackles (12 solo), 3.5 TFLs on the season playing both defensive end and tackle
- » Team-high 2.5 TFLs vs. Indiana

- » Made his Illinois debut against Western Kentucky
- » First career start against Nebraska

**High School:**

- » Three-star recruit by 247Sports
- » Two-star recruit by Rivals and Scout
- » Ranked No. 91 strong-side DE in the nation by 247Sports
- » Ranked No. 70 recruit in Alabama by 247Sports
- » Played at Hueytown for head coach Scott Mansell
- » Captained his high school team as a senior
- » 2016 Alabama Sports Writers Assoc. 6A all-state second team
- » 2016 all-city selection
- » 47 tackles, 8.0 TFLs, 2.0 sacks and one forced fumble as senior
- » Led Hueytown to an 8-3 record and the Alabama 6A state playoffs as a senior
- » Also wrestled in high school and placed in top six at state twice

**Personal:**

- » Born June 14, 1999
- » Son of Antonio and Felicia Weldon
- » Has two sisters, Jamiyah Weldon and Jameria Dubose, and two brothers, Malik Woods and Erskine Hawkins
- » Picked Illinois because, "the coaching staff is great, the players are great and it's somewhere that I could be a part of making a change."
- » Wants to own an athletic training facility or coach following his playing career
- » Majoring in community health

**CAREER HIGHS**

**Tackles:** 9 vs Purdue 10/31/20, vs UTSA 09/04/21

**Sacks:** 1 at Penn St. 10/23/21

**Tackles For Loss:** 2 vs UTSA 09/04/21

**Interceptions:** 1 vs Minnesota 11/07/20, at Rutgers 11/14/20

**DEFENSIVE STATISTICS**

YEAR	TEAM	G	UA	A	TOT	TFL	PD	FF	FR	BLK	SACK	INT
2017	ILL	11	12	12	24	3.5-7	0	0	0	0	0	0
2018	ILL	4	11	2	13	4-12	3	0	0	0	1	0
2019	ILL	9	10	4	14	5.5-19	0	1	0	0	0.5	0
2020	ILL	4	2	2	4	0.5-0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	ILL	10	7	5	12	2-5	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		38	42	25	67	15.5-43	3	1	0	0	1.5	0

## 42 LUKE ZARDZIN

**LB, 6-0, 205, R-FR.**

**MOUNT PROSPECT, ILL. / PROSPECT HIGH SCHOOL**

**2021 Freshman:**

- » Did not play in a game
- » Illinois Scout Team Special Teams Player of the Week following the win at Minnesota 11/6/21

**High School:**

- » Helped Mount Prospect win the MSL East Division as a senior
- » 2021 MSL East Offensive Player of the Year
- » 2021 all-state and 2019 all-state honorable mention
- » Three-time all-conference
- » Two-time all-area
- » Also played basketball and ran track and field

**Personal:**

- » Born July 28, 2003
- » Son of Dave and Wendy Zardzin
- » Has one brother, Jack, and two sisters, Paige and Kate
- » Chose Illinois because, "The facilities and coaching staff are second to none in the country."
- » Majoring in recreation, sport, and tourism





**THE COACHES**



# BRET BIELEMA

HEAD FOOTBALL COACH

IOWA, 1992

SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS

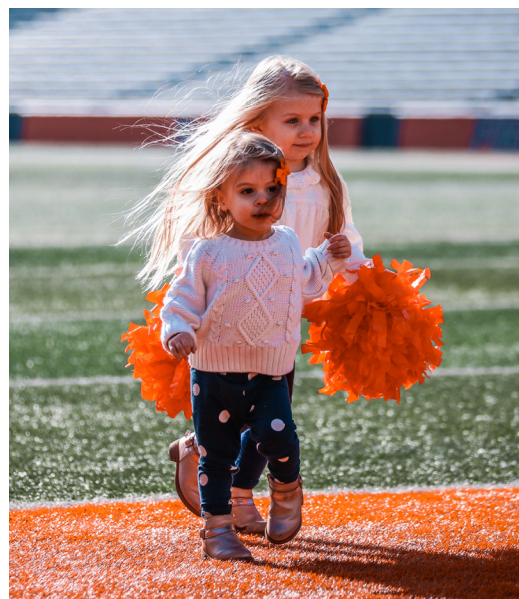
Bret Bielema was named as the 26th Fighting Illini Head Football Coach in the 132-year history of the program in December 2020.

A native of Prophetstown, Illinois, Bielema came to Champaign with 24 years of collegiate coaching experience and a 12-year record of 97-58 (.626) as head coach at Wisconsin and Arkansas.

Bielema led Illinois to a 5-7 record in his first since with the Fighting Illini in 2021, including road wins that gained national notoriety over #7 Penn State and #20 Minnesota to give Bielema more AP/CFP ranked wins than any other first-year coach in Illinois history. The Illini won at #7 Penn State, 20-18, in nine overtimes to mark the longest game in college football history. Chase Brown ran for 223 yards, the most ever by a Big Ten opponent at Beaver Stadium, and Brandon Peters connected with Casey Washington in the back of the end zone of the ninth overtime to stun the Penn State crowd. Two games later, Illinois earned its first ever win over a College Football Playoff ranked opponent by taking down #20 Minnesota, 14-6, in Minneapolis behind a dominant effort by the defense.

The Illini run game and defense were the keys to Illinois success in 2021, as Chase Brown rushed for over 1,000 yards and the Illini's scoring defense (31st from 97th), third down defense (31st from 89th), and total defense (52nd from 114th) all improved more than 50 spots in the national rankings from 2020. Twelve Illini earned All-Big Ten honors, most notably Kerby Joseph, who was Illinois' first All-Big Ten first-team defensive back since 1989. Joseph tied for the national lead in interceptions with five and ranked third in the nation in fumble recoveries with three.

From 2006-12 Bielema was the head coach at Wisconsin, where he led the Badgers to three Big Ten championships (2010-12), six consecutive bowl games and a 68-24 record (.739).



## THE BIELEMA FILE

### HOMETOWN

Prophetstown, Illinois

### BIRTHDATE

January 13, 1970

### FAMILY

Wife: Jen

Daughters: Briella and Brexli

### EDUCATION

B.S., marketing – Iowa, 1992

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Iowa, 1989-92

Signed free-agent contract with the Seattle Seahawks, 1993

Milwaukee Mustangs, Arena Football League, 1994

### BOWL EXPERIENCE (HEAD COACH)

- 2016 Belk Bowl
- 2015 Liberty Bowl
- 2014 Texas Bowl
- 2013 Rose Bowl \*
- 2012 Rose Bowl
- 2011 Rose Bowl
- 2009 Champs Sports Bowl
- 2008 Champs Sports Bowl
- 2008 Outback Bowl
- 2007 Capital One Bowl

\* - did not coach in the game

Bielema then spent five seasons as head coach at Arkansas from 2013-17. After inheriting a depleted roster and enduring a difficult first season, he led the Razorbacks to three consecutive bowl games, including victories against Texas in 2014 and Kansas State in 2015.

In Bielema's debut season at Wisconsin in 2006, the Badgers finished 12-1, including a victory in the Capital One Bowl against Arkansas. He was the first coach in Big Ten history to win 10 games in his first season, the first Wisconsin coach to win 11 games prior to a bowl game and became the third coach in NCAA history to win 12 games in his first season. Bielema won 17 of his first 18 games with the Badgers. The Badgers shared or won Big Ten championships three straight seasons from 2010-12 and he led Wisconsin to victories in the first two Big Ten championship games.

Bielema's coaching pedigree and list of football mentors matches that of any coach in the nation. He played for and coached under Hall-of-Famer Hayden Fry, helping the Hawkeyes share the 1990 Big Ten title with Illinois. After two years as a graduate assistant and six seasons as linebacker coach at Iowa, Bielema spent two years as Co-Defensive Coordinator at Kansas State under Hall-of-Famer Bill Snyder, helping the Wildcats win the 2003 Big 12 Championship. Two seasons later, he was named Defensive Coordinator at Wisconsin under Hall-of-Famer Barry Alvarez and moved into the head coaching role of the Badgers in 2006 when Alvarez retired.

Bielema spent the previous three seasons before Illinois in the National Football League. His first two seasons in the NFL were with the New England Patriots as a consultant to six-time Super Bowl champion head coach Bill Belichick in 2018 and as the team's defensive line coach in 2019, when the Patriots won the AFC East with a 12-4 record and had the NFL's best defense. In Bielema's first season with the Patriots, New England was 11-5 and defeated the Los Angeles Rams in Super Bowl LIII. He was the outside linebackers coach and senior assistant for the New York Giants during the 2020 season.

Bielema was a defensive lineman at Iowa from 1989-92, when he was a four-time letterman under Fry. After joining the team as a walk-on, Bielema earned a scholarship after his first year, started as a junior and was named a team captain for his senior season. Bielema graduated from Iowa in 1992 with a bachelor's degree in marketing.

Following his graduation, Bielema signed a free-agent contract with the Seattle Seahawks and ended his playing career in 1994 as a member of the Milwaukee Mustangs of the Arena Football League.

He and his wife, Jen, have two daughters, Briella Nicole and Brexli Nichole.



Josh Whitman introduced Bret Bielema as Illinois head coach on Dec. 21, 2020.

### THE BRET BIELEMA FILE

#### COACHING EXPERIENCE

2021-	Illinois	Head Coach
2020	New York Giants	Outside Linebackers, Senior Assistant Coach
2019	New England Patriots	Defensive Line
2018	New England Patriots	Consultant to the Head Coach
2013-17	Arkansas	Head Coach (29-34)
2006-12	Wisconsin	Head Coach (68-24)
2004-05	Wisconsin	Defensive Coordinator
2002-03	Kansas State	Co-Defensive Coordinator
1996-2001	Iowa	Linebackers
1994-95	Iowa	Graduate Assistant

#### BIELEMA'S HEAD COACHING RECORD

YEAR	TEAM	RECORD	POSTSEASON
2006	Wisconsin	12-1	Capital One Bowl
2007	Wisconsin	9-4	Outback Bowl
2008	Wisconsin	7-6	Champs Sports Bowl
2009	Wisconsin	10-3	Champs Sports Bowl
2010	Wisconsin	11-2	Rose Bowl
2011	Wisconsin	11-3	Rose Bowl
2012	Wisconsin	8-5	Rose Bowl (did not coach game)
2013	Arkansas	3-9	
2014	Arkansas	7-6	Texas Bowl
2015	Arkansas	8-5	Liberty Bowl
2016	Arkansas	7-6	Belk Bowl
2017	Arkansas	4-8	
2021	Illinois	5-7	
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>13 SEASONS</b>	<b>102-65 (.611)</b>	<b>BIG TEN: 41-24 (.631)</b>



# RYAN WALTERS

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR

COLORADO, 2008

SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS

## THE WALTERS FILE

### HOMETOWN

Aurora, Colorado

### BIRTHDATE

January 21, 1986

### FAMILY

Wife: Tara  
Sons: Aaron and Cason

### EDUCATION

B.A., history – Colorado, 2008

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Colorado, 2004-08

Ryan Walters joined the Illinois football staff as defensive coordinator in January 2021. One of the nation's top young coaches, Walters arrived at Illinois following six seasons at Missouri, including three years as the Tigers' defensive coordinator and two years as co-defensive coordinator.

Walters engineered one of the best defensive turnarounds in the nation in 2021, helping Illinois to a 5-7 record and ranked wins over #7 Penn State in the longest game in college football history (9 OT) and #20 Minnesota, the Illini's first ever win over a College Football Playoff ranked opponent. Illinois' scoring defense (31st from 97th), third down defense (31st from 89th), and total defense (52nd from 114th) all improved more than 50 spots in the national rankings from 2020. The Illini made massive gains in the Big Ten defensive rankings, as well, jumping nine or more spots in scoring defense (4th from 14th), touchdowns allowed (t-3rd from 14th), yards allowed per game (5th from 14th), and passing yards allowed per game (1st from 10th).

Six Illini defenders earned All-Big Ten honors in 2021, most notably S Kerby Joseph, who was Illinois' first All-Big Ten first-team defensive back since 1989. Joseph tied for the national lead in interceptions with five and ranked third in the nation in fumble recoveries with three before being drafted in the third round of the 2022 NFL Draft by the Detroit Lions. Fellow safety Sydney Brown, OLB Owen Carney Jr., DL Jer'Zhan Newton, DL Keith Randolph Jr., and DB Devon Witherspoon were all honorable mention All-Big Ten selections.

For the exceptional improvement, Walters was named a nominee for the Broyles Award, given to the nation's top assistant coach. He signed a three-year contract extension on Nov. 14, 2021.

In April 2020, Walters was announced as one of 12 coaching participants in the National Coalition of Minority Football Coaches' inaugural Coalition Academy, a first of its kind mentorship program pairing influential athletic directors with minority football coaches.

Walters had an impressive run at Missouri where he oversaw an impressive transformation of the Tiger defense into one of the SEC's top units. In 2019, Walters' defense ranked in the nation's Top 20 in several major categories, including total defense (14th NCAA/3rd SEC – 312.0 avg) and scoring defense (17th NCAA/6th SEC – 19.4 avg.), while excelling as a top-10 pass defense (eighth in passing yards allowed NCAA/2nd SEC – 179.3 avg.).

Walters took the reins as Missouri's defensive coordinator permanently for the 2018 season, and during the course of that year, the defense's improved play was a big factor in Missouri's 4-0 mark during November on the way to an eight-win season and bid to the 2018 AutoZone Liberty Bowl.

In December 2017, Walters was promoted to the position of defensive coordinator before Missouri's 2017 Texas Bowl appearance after assuming control of the entire secondary before that season. He had focused on the safeties in his first two years with the program.

Prior to making the move to Missouri in 2015, Walters coached at Memphis where he spent the 2014 season as cornerbacks coach and oversaw a defense that was among the most improved in the nation when the Tigers went 10-3.

A native of Aurora, Colorado, Walters played collegiately at Colorado, where he was a standout safety for the Buffaloes (2004-08). He began his coaching career as a student assistant at Colorado working with the secondary in 2009, and then spent two years on staff at Arizona, where he was a graduate assistant in 2010 before being promoted to defensive backs coach for the 2011 season.

From there, Walters moved to Oklahoma as a graduate assistant cornerbacks coach in 2012, as the Sooners went 10-3 and played in the 2013 Cotton Bowl. He moved to North Texas for the 2013 season, where he coached corners and helped lead UNT to a 9-4 record in its first year in Conference USA and a win in the 2013 Heart of Dallas Bowl.

As a player, Walters had a standout career as a safety at Colorado. He started 33 times in 46 contests for the Buffaloes, and earned honorable mention All-Big 12 honors from the Associated Press and first-team All-Colorado honors from the state's National Football Foundation his senior year.

A 2008 team captain for the Buffaloes, Walters was voted as team MVP that season by his teammates. He had 87 tackles, two sacks, seven pass deflections, three fumble recoveries and two interceptions as a senior. When his playing days ended, his 20 career passes defended ranked No. 15 in Colorado history and his 223 career tackles were No. 45 all-time.

Walters earned his degree in history from Colorado in December 2008 with dual majors in History and Ethnic Studies. Walters and his wife Tara have two sons, Aaron and Cason.

## WALTERS YEAR-BY-YEAR

2021-	Illinois	Defensive Coordinator
2019-20	Missouri	Defensive Coordinator/Safeties
2018	Missouri	Defensive Coordinator/Secondary
2017	Missouri	Co-Defensive Coordinator/Secondary
2016	Missouri	Co-Defensive Coordinator/Safeties
2015	Missouri	Safeties
2014	Memphis	Cornerbacks
2013	North Texas	Cornerbacks
2012	Oklahoma	Graduate Assistant/Cornerbacks
2011	Arizona	Defensive Backs
2010	Arizona	Graduate Assistant
2009	Colorado	Student Assistant/Secondary



# BARRY LUNNEY JR.

## OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR/QUARTERBACKS

### ARKANSAS, 1996

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### FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS

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Barry Lunney Jr. was named the Illinois football team's offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach on January 8, 2022. Lunney and Illinois head coach Bret Bielema reunited after Lunney spent five years as the tight ends coach at Arkansas under Bielema from 2013-17.

Lunney came to San Antonio after spending six seasons as the tight ends coach and special teams coordinator at his alma mater Arkansas. He took over as the interim head coach late in the 2019 season and led the Razorbacks in games against No. 1 LSU and Missouri.

Lunney comes to Champaign from UTSA, where he served as associate head coach/offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach in 2020 and 2021. Lunney helped bring UTSA to new heights during his time in San Antonio, reaching No. 15 in the national rankings in 2021. UTSA opened the 2021 season with 11 straight wins, won its first Conference USA championship with a 49-41 win over Western Kentucky in the C-USA title game, and appeared in the Frisco Bowl.

Lunney also spent three seasons at Tulsa (2000-02), two at San Jose State (2003-04), nine as the offensive coordinator at Bentonville (Ark.) High School (2005-13), and nine combined years at Arkansas (1998-99, 2013-19).

The UTSA offense ranked 11th in the nation in scoring and 34th in total offense in 2021, averaging 36.9 points per game and 439.0 yards per game. Running back Sincere McCormick, a two-time All-American and two-time C-USA Offensive Player of the Year under Lunney, ranked seventh in the nation in rushing yards (1,479) and 23rd in total touchdowns (15). McCormick broke his own UTSA record for rushing yards and touchdowns, while earning Doak Walker Award semifinalist honors.

Lunney helped develop the Arkansas offensive attack into one that was spurred through its tight ends. During the 2018 season, the Razorbacks made a living off production out of the tight end position, completing 58.8 percent of the group's targets, which was above the team average. Arkansas finished the year ranked second in the country in tight end touchdowns and tied for fourth in the nation in tight end first downs, as TE Cheyenne O'Grady led the team in receptions (30) and touchdowns (six). In 2019, O'Grady led the Razorbacks with 33 catches and four touchdowns in 12 games.

UTSA's balanced attack also featured QB Frank Harris, who threw for 3,177 yards (27th in the nation) and 27 touchdowns (17th in the nation) in 2021, and a trio of receivers that combined to make UTSA one of only three schools in the nation with three receivers with 50+ receptions, 750+ yards, and 5+ touchdowns. WR Zakhari Franklin had 81 receptions for 1,027 yards (37th in the nation) and 12 touchdowns (12th in the nation), WR Joshua Cephus had 71 receptions for 803 yards and six touchdowns, and WR De'Corian Clark had 52 receptions for 755 yards.

From 2014-16, Lunney developed one of the top tight ends in Arkansas history in Hunter Henry, who won the John Mackey Award and was a consensus first-team All-American as a junior in 2015. Henry was the first tight end taken in the 2016 NFL Draft with the 35th overall pick by the Chargers, and he has become one of the top receiving threats in the NFL.

Lunney's offense made huge strides in his first season overseeing the offense in 2020, as he guided the Roadrunners to a 7-5 record, a runner-up finish in the Conference USA West Division at 6-2, and an appearance in the SERVPRO First Responder Bowl. In his first season, Lunney improved UTSA's offense 60 spots in the nation rankings for total offense, 50 spots in scoring offense, 45 spots in rushing offense, and 60 spots in third down percentage. UTSA broke single-season school records for rushing yards (2,585), rushing yards per game (215.4), yards per rush (5.21) and rushing touchdowns (24). The rushing touchdowns record lasted just one season, as Lunney's offense produced 26 rushing touchdowns in 2021. McCormick set UTSA single-season records for yards (1,467), carries (249) and touchdowns (11) in 2020, then broke all three records in 2021 with 1,479 rushing yards, 298 carries, and 15 rushing touchdowns.

Before returning to the Razorbacks, Lunney served as the offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach at Bentonville High School (Ark.) from 2005-12. In his eight years at Bentonville, the Tigers won 78 games, including 25 straight in 2010-11, played in four state championship games, claiming state titles in 2008 and 2010, and won six straight 7A West Conference crowns from 2007-12. Bentonville played in three 7A state championship games and won at least 12 games in four of his last five seasons.

Lunney spent two seasons as the co-offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach at San Jose State from 2003-04. Prior to that, Lunney spent three seasons at Tulsa from 2000-02, first working with quarterbacks in 2000 and 2001 and then moving to wide receivers in 2002. In 2000, quarterback Josh Blankenship ranked fifth in the WAC in total offense and receiver Don Shoals led the conference and ranked 11th in the NCAA in receptions per game.

His coaching career began with two seasons as a graduate assistant at Arkansas from 1998-99 following a standout career for the Razorbacks. In 1998, Arkansas won its first eight games and rose to No. 9 in the national rankings on the way to sharing the SEC Western Division title and earning a berth in the Citrus Bowl. Lunney served as the Razorbacks' running backs coach for the bowl game and throughout the spring of 1999.

As a player for the Razorbacks, Lunney lettered from 1992-95, starting 40 games at quarterback, and was a team captain on the 1995 team that played in the SEC Championship Game for the first time in school history. In his first game as the starting quarterback, he led Arkansas to an upset win at No. 4 Tennessee. Lunney left Arkansas holding school career records for passing yards, passing touchdowns, pass completions, pass attempts and total offensive plays. Lunney also played baseball at Arkansas. He was drafted by the Montreal Expos out of high school in 1992 and by the Minnesota Twins in 1996 and played one season of minor league baseball in the Twins organization.

Lunney graduated from Arkansas in 1996 with a bachelor's degree in kinesiology. He and his wife, Janelle, have two sons, Luke and Levi. His grandfather, John, lettered at Arkansas from 1946-49. His father, Barry Sr., retired after 28 years as a high school football coach in Arkansas, winning eight state championships at Bentonville High School and Fort Smith Southside High School.

### THE LUNNEY FILE

#### HOMETOWN

Fort Smith, Arkansas

#### BIRTHDATE

September 11, 1974

#### FAMILY

Wife: Janelle  
Sons: Luke and Levi

#### EDUCATION

B.S., Kinesiology – Arkansas, 1996

#### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Arkansas, 1992-95

### LUNNEY YEAR-BY-YEAR

2022	Illinois	Offensive Coordinator/QBs
2020-21	UTSA	Assoc. Head Coach/Offensive Coordinator/QBs
2019	Arkansas	Special Teams Coordinator/Tight Ends
2013-18	Arkansas	Tight Ends
2005-12	Bentonville HS (Ark.)	Offensive Coordinator/QBs
2003-04	San Jose State	Offensive Coordinator/QBs
2002	Tulsa	Wide Receivers
2000-01	Tulsa	Quarterbacks
1999	Arkansas	Running Backs
1998	Arkansas	Graduate Assistant - Offense



# GEORGE McDONALD

ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/WIDE RECEIVERS

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, 1999

SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS

George McDonald was named assistant head coach/wide receivers coach at the University of Illinois on January 20, 2021. McDonald returned to his alma mater following six seasons at North Carolina State and with experience in three Power-5 conferences and the NFL.

McDonald helped Illinois to a pair of road ranked wins in his first season back in Champaign, first a 9 OT thriller at #7 Penn State in the longest game in college football history, then a win at #20 Minnesota. McDonald's wide receiver unit was led by Isaiah Williams, who had 47 receptions for 525 yards and six total touchdowns, after he transitioned from quarterback for the final two practices of Spring Ball.

McDonald began his coaching career as a graduate assistant at Ball State before earning his first full-time position at Northern Illinois from 2001-03. While in DeKalb, he coached First-Team All-MAC receiver, and current Minnesota head coach, P.J. Fleck, second-team All-American Dan Sheldon, and All-American Darrell "The Thrill" Hill.

After a season at Stanford as tight ends coach in 2004 where he coached Mackey Award finalist Alex Smith, McDonald followed Bill Cubit from the Cardinal to Western Michigan as offensive coordinator and wide receivers coach of the Broncos. Cubit later was interim head coach at Illinois in 2015. One of his players at WMU was 2005 MAC Player of the Year, Biletnikoff Award semifinalist and All-American Greg Jennings. McDonald then took a position on former Illini tight end Tim Brewster's first staff at Minnesota from 2007-08, where he coached First-Team All-Big Ten performer Eric Decker.

McDonald made the jump to the NFL's Cleveland Browns from 2009-10 as wide receivers coach under Eric Mangini. He then was named wide receivers coach/passing game coordinator at the University of Miami from 2011-12 under Al Golden. He was actually named the receivers coach at Arkansas under then-new head coach Bret Bielema in December 2012, but was offered the offensive coordinator position at Syracuse under former Illini assistant coach Scott Shafer a few weeks later where he spent the 2013-14 seasons. His six-year stint at NC State began in 2015 under former Bielema assistant Dave Doeren as wide receivers coach and has watched his role grow to passing game coordinator, co-offensive coordinator, and most recently as assistant head coach of the Wolfpack. Under McDonald's tutelage, for the first time in ACC history, NC State had a pair of wide receivers named to the All-ACC first-team in 2018 when Kelvin Harmon and Jakobi Meyers both topped 1,000 receiving yards. During his career, he has mentored 18 players who have gone on to play in the NFL.

McDonald was a four-year letterwinner at receiver for the Fighting Illini and completed his Illinois football career with 57 receptions for 589 yards and four touchdowns. He led the Big Ten in kickoff return yardage in 1996 (736) while returning 57 kickoffs for 1,276 yards (22.4 avg.) during his career. McDonald also ran track his freshman and senior years, earning All-Big Ten honors his senior year when he set an Illinois record with a time of 6.74 in the 60 meters, a mark that still ranks seventh on the Illini top times list, to win the 1999 Big Ten Indoor Championships 60m title.

Born in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, McDonald graduated from Buena Park High School in California before his collegiate career at Illinois where he played for Lou Tepper and Ron Turner, and was a teammate of Fighting Illini Athletics Director Josh Whitman. He earned his bachelor's degree in health planning and administration from Illinois in 1999. He and his wife, the former Heather Anderson, have two sons, Roman and Maverick.

## THE McDONALD FILE

### HOMETOWN

Born in Ft. Wayne, Indiana; Graduate of Buena Park (California) High School

### BIRTHDATE

May 10, 1976

### FAMILY

Wife: former Heather Anderson  
Sons: Roman and Maverick

### EDUCATION

B.S., health planning and administration – Illinois, 1999

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Illinois, 1995-98  
(4-year letterman in football/2-year letterman in track and field)

## McDONALD YEAR-BY-YEAR

2021	Illinois	Assistant Head Coach/Wide Receivers
2020	North Carolina State	WR/Pass Game Coordinator/Recruiting Coordinator/Asst. HC
2019	North Carolina State	WR/Co-Offensive Coordinator/Recruiting Coordinator
2017-18	North Carolina State	WR/Passing Game Coordinator
2015-16	North Carolina State	Wide Receivers
2013-14	Syracuse	Offensive Coordinator/Asst. Head Coach
2011-12	Miami (Fla.)	Wide Receivers/Passing Game Coordinator
2009-10	Cleveland Browns	Wide Receivers
2007-08	Minnesota	Wide Receivers
2005-06	Western Michigan	Offensive Coordinator/Wide Receivers
2004	Stanford	Tight Ends
2001-03	Northern Illinois	Wide Receivers
2000	Ball State	Graduate Assistant



# KEVIN KANE

**ASSOCIATE HEAD COACH/OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS**

**KANSAS, 2006**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE KANE FILE

### HOMETOWN

Kansas City, Missouri

### BIRTHDATE

December 18, 1983

### FAMILY

Wife: Theresa  
Sons: Jack and Colin  
Daughter: Nora

### EDUCATION

B.A., communication studies –  
Kansas, 2006

M.S., educational leadership policy  
analysis – Wisconsin, 2010

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Kansas, 2002-05

Kevin Kane joined the Illinois staff as associate head coach/outside linebackers coach in January 2021. Kane reunited with head coach Bret Bielema following three seasons leading a stingy defense at SMU as defensive coordinator and linebackers coach.

Kane was a part of one of the best defensive turnarounds in the nation in 2021, helping Illinois to a 5-7 record and ranked wins over #7 Penn State and #20 Minnesota. Illinois' scoring defense (31st from 97th), third down defense (31st from 89th), and total defense (52nd from 114th) all improved more than 50 spots in the national rankings from 2020. The Illini made massive gains in the Big Ten defensive rankings, as well, jumping 9+ spots in scoring defense (4th from 14th), touchdowns allowed (t-3rd from 14th), yards allowed per game (5th from 14th), and passing yards allowed per game (1st from 10th).

Kane joined the SMU staff in 2018 and in his first two seasons led the Mustangs to several national top 25 rankings, including the No. 1 ranking for sacks per game (3.92) and No. 3 ranking in tackles for loss (8.5 avg) in 2019.

He made the move to SMU after spending the 2016 and 2017 seasons as the defensive coordinator at Northern Illinois. That was his second stint at NIU, having served in multiple capacities for the Huskies from 2011-14. During the 2015 season, Kane coached linebackers at Kansas.

Kane helped the Huskies to five bowl appearances during his time in DeKalb, including a win in the 2012 GoDaddy.com Bowl over Arkansas State, and three MAC Championships. The Huskies ranked 26th in the nation in total defense in 2017, leading the nation in tackles for loss (8.8) and ranking second in sacks (3.31) and fourth in defensive TDs (5). NIU ranked seventh nationally in yards per play allowed at just 4.52, trailing only Alabama, Clemson, Wisconsin, Washington, Ohio State and Michigan.

NIU also ranked in the top 20 in third down conversion percentage defense (11th), rushing defense (16th) and first downs allowed (19th). In 2016, NIU ranked 17th nationally and led the MAC in red zone defense.

Kane made the move to NIU after three seasons (2008-10) at Wisconsin, serving as a graduate assistant (2008-09) and quality control assistant (2010) under Bielema. While at Wisconsin, the Badgers earned berths to the 2008 and 2009 Champs Sports Bowls and 2011 Rose Bowl.

His coaching career began in 2006 at Kansas, where he spent two seasons as a student assistant for his alma mater. He helped the Jayhawks to the 2008 Orange Bowl under Mark Mangino.

A 2006 graduate of Kansas, Kane played linebacker for the Jayhawks, earning All-Big 12 honorable mention accolades from the Associated Press as a junior and senior. He helped Kansas to a pair of bowl appearances, including a win in the 2005 Fort Worth Bowl. Kane was a three-time Academic All-Big 12 honoree and was named team captain as a senior. He graduated from Rockhurst High School in Kansas City, where he helped lead the Hawkllets to a Missouri state championship as a junior. Kane earned his master's degree in education at Wisconsin in 2010.

He and wife Theresa have two sons, Jack and Colin, and one daughter, Nora.

## KANE YEAR-BY-YEAR

2021-	Illinois	Associate Head Coach/Outside Linebackers
2018-20	SMU	Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers
2017	Northern Illinois	Defensive Coordinator/Safeties
2016	Northern Illinois	Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers
2015	Kansas	Linebackers
2013-14	Northern Illinois	Linebackers/Special Teams Coordinator
2012	Northern Illinois	Linebackers
2011	Northern Illinois	Tight Ends/Fullbacks
2010	Wisconsin	Quality Control
2008-09	Wisconsin	Graduate Assistant
2006-07	Kansas	Student Assistant



# BART MILLER

OFFENSIVE LINE

NEW MEXICO, 2007

SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS

Bart Miller was named Illinois football's offensive line coach in December 2020. Miller joined Bret Bielema's coaching staff for the second time and comes to Champaign-Urbana after two successful seasons as offensive line coach and Offensive Run-Game Coordinator at Wyoming.

Miller coached one of the most veteran offensive line groups in the nation in 2021, including All-Big Ten performers Doug Kramer (second team), Vederian Lowe (honorable mention), and Alex Palczewski (honorable mention). The group paved the way for Chase Brown to be Illinois' 14th 1,000-yard rusher in program history and pull off ranked road wins at #7 Penn State and #20 Minnesota. The season-defining win at Penn State was fueled by the offensive line, as Brown rushed for 223 yards - the most ever by an opponent at Beaver Stadium - and freshman Josh McCray had another 142 rushing yards, the most ever by an Illini true freshman against a top-25 opponent. For the season, the Illini run blocking was graded #14 in the nation according to Pro Football Focus. Following the season, Lowe (Vikings) and Kramer (Bears) were both selected in the sixth round of the 2021 NFL Draft.

Miller's first full-time coaching position came as the offensive line coach at Wisconsin under Bielema in 2012. He took over the offensive line unit in September of 2012 after serving as a graduate assistant coach the previous season at Wisconsin. The Badgers ranked No. 13 in the nation in rushing offense in 2012, averaging 236.4 rushing yards per game. Wisconsin won its third straight Big Ten Championship that season, defeating Nebraska 70-31 in the Big Ten Championship Game, and played in a third consecutive Rose Bowl.

At Wisconsin, Miller coached All-Big Ten first team selections Travis Frederick (center) and Rick Wagner (left tackle) in 2012. Frederick earned All-America first team honors from Pro Football Weekly and went on to be the first-round selection of the Dallas Cowboys in the NFL Draft. Wagner received All-America second team recognition from CBS and was a fifth-round selection by the Baltimore Ravens. A junior on that offensive line, guard Ryan Groy, went on to earn All-Big Ten first team honors in 2013 and was a Third Team Associated Press All-American in 2013. He also went on to play in the NFL. Wisconsin's offensive line unit blocked for running back Montee Ball, who was the 2012 Doak Walker Award Winner, a two-time (2011 and '12) consensus All-American, the 2012 Big Ten Offensive Player of the Year and a 2012 Heisman Trophy finalist.

In his latest stop at Wyoming, Miller joined the Cowboy staff in 2019 as offensive line coach and was promoted to Offensive Run-Game Coordinator in addition to his offensive line duties for the 2020 season. In his first season coaching the offensive line, the Cowboys were named to the 2019 Joe Moore Award Honor Roll, honoring the top collegiate offensive line unit in the nation. Wyoming's offensive line also paved the way for the Cowboys to rank No. 2 in the Mountain West Conference and No. 23 in the nation in rushing offense in 2019, averaging 214.8 rushing yards per game, and the Cowboys produced the conference's leading rusher in back-to-back seasons in 2019 and 2020.

Miller coached the offensive line at Ohio University in 2018 when the Bobcats posted a 9-4 overall record including a 6-2 mark in the Mid-American Conference to place second in the East Division. Ohio earned a berth in the DXL Frisco Bowl in Frisco, Texas, where the Bobcats defeated San Diego State, 27-0.

Ohio ranked No. 9 in the nation in rushing offense in 2018, averaging 258.5 yards per game. The Bobcats ranked No. 12 in the NCAA in scoring offense (40.1 points per game) and were No. 16 in total offense (466.8 yards per game). The offensive unit also ranked No. 8 in the nation in third-down conversions (48.7 percent), was No. 9 in time of possession (33:18), tied for 17th in first downs gained (318) and ranked No. 23 in the NCAA in red-zone offense as it converted 88.9 percent of its red-zone opportunities into scores.

While coaching the tight ends at Air Force in 2017, Miller was part of an offensive unit that averaged 417.5 yards of total offense per game to rank No. 3 in the Mountain West and averaged 307.4 rushing yards per game to lead the league and rank No. 4 in the nation. The Falcons also averaged 31.4 points per game to rank No. 3 in the conference. Miller's tight end unit averaged 19.5 yards per reception.

Miller coached the offensive line at Minnesota during the 2016 season when the Golden Gophers enjoyed one of their most successful seasons in recent history that year, winning nine games (9-4 record) for the first time since 2003 and placing fourth in the Big Ten West Division. The Gophers earned a bid to the 2016 Holiday Bowl, where they defeated Washington State, 17-12. Miller coached offensive lineman Jonah Pirsig, who earned All-Big Ten third team honors from both the coaches and the media.

Prior to Minnesota, Miller coached the offensive line at Florida Atlantic for the 2014 and '15 seasons. Miller's offensive line at Florida Atlantic allowed only 21 sacks in 869 plays in 2014, and only 26 sacks in 887 opportunities in 2015. In the four seasons before Miller arrived, the Owls had allowed an average of 31 sacks per season.

As the offensive line coach at New Mexico State for the 2013 season, Miller helped create a new offensive system for the Aggies which in the last five games of the season averaged 27.4 points per game and 165.2 rushing yards per game. He took over a line that had allowed 45 sacks the year prior to his arrival and improved that protection by more than half to only 20 sacks allowed in more than 400 plays in 2013.

In 2011 as a graduate assistant during his first stint with Bielema, Miller helped coach a Wisconsin team that ranked No. 11 in the country in rushing offense, averaging 235.6 rushing yards and worked directly with the offensive line and tight ends. The 2011 offense averaged 44.1 points per game to rank No. 6 in the nation. Wisconsin won the Inaugural Big Ten Championship Game over Michigan State, captured its second consecutive Big Ten title and appeared in the Rose Bowl for the second straight season. Miller helped coach First Team All-Big Ten honorees Peter Konz (center), Josh Oglesby (tackle) and Kevin Zeitler (guard). Konz and Zeitler were All-America first team selections by both the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) and Pro Football Weekly.

As a player at the University of New Mexico from 2003-07 under head coach Rocky Long, Miller was a starter and two-year letterman on the offensive line. He earned Academic All-Mountain West Conference honors as a junior and senior. The Lobos had a 1,000-yard rusher, two 1,000-yard receivers and a 3,000-yard passer in 2007. The Lobos appeared in four bowl games during Miller's career: the 2003 Las Vegas Bowl, 2004 Emerald Bowl and 2006 and '07 New Mexico Bowls. New Mexico won the 2007 New Mexico Bowl over Nevada by a score of 23-0.

Miller played football and graduated from Elk Grove High School in the Chicago area prior to completing his bachelor's degree in organizational communication from New Mexico in 2007. He obtained a master's degree in education from New Mexico State in 2011. Originally from Omaha, Nebraska, Miller and his wife, Amy, have two sons, Barrett and Gunner.

## THE MILLER FILE

### HOMETOWN

Omaha, Nebraska

### BIRTHDATE

May 6, 1985

### FAMILY

Wife: Amy

Sons: Barrett and Gunner

### EDUCATION

B.A., business communications –  
New Mexico, 2007

M.S., education – New Mexico State,  
2011

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

New Mexico, 2004-07

## MILLER YEAR-BY-YEAR

2021-	Illinois	Offensive Line
2020	Wyoming	Offensive Run-Game Coordinator/Offensive Line
2019	Wyoming	Offensive Line
2018	Ohio	Offensive Line
2017	Air Force	Tight Ends
2016	Minnesota	Offensive Line
2014-15	Florida Atlantic	Offensive Line
2013	New Mexico State	Offensive Line
2012	Wisconsin	Offensive Line
2011	Wisconsin	Graduate Assistant
2010	New Mexico State	Graduate Assistant



# ANDY BUH

## LINEBACKERS

NEVADA, 1996

### SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS

Andy Buh was named linebackers coach at Illinois in January 2021. Buh brings 23 years of collegiate coaching experience to Champaign-Urbana including four different stops as defensive coordinator in three Power 5 conferences.

Buh was a part of one of the best defensive turnarounds in the nation in 2021, helping Illinois to a 5-7 record and ranked wins over #7 Penn State and #20 Minnesota. Illinois' scoring defense (31st from 97th), third down defense (31st from 89th), and total defense (52nd from 114th) all improved more than 50 spots in the national rankings from 2020. The Illini made massive gains in the Big Ten defensive rankings, as well, jumping nine or more spots in scoring defense (4th from 14th), touchdowns allowed (t-3rd from 14th), yards allowed per game (5th from 14th), and passing yards allowed per game (1st from 10th).

Bielema and Buh spent the 2012 season together at Wisconsin helping the Badgers win the Big Ten Championship. He spent the 2020 season as outside linebackers coach at Arizona. Buh also spent time in the Big Ten as defensive coordinator and linebackers coach at Rutgers in 2019 and three years as defensive coordinator at Maryland from 2016-18. He also served as a coordinator earlier in his career at California, Nevada and Stanford.

Buh had a successful three-year run at Maryland, guiding a Terrapins defense that collected 37 sacks in 2016. Buh's defense allowed just one 300-yard passer in his first season at Maryland and allowed just 212.3 passing yards per game on the season. The following

year, Buh's defense collected 10 interceptions and saw four players earn All-Big Ten honors.

While at Kentucky, Buh, who served as outside linebackers coach, helped a defense that allowed just 198.1 passing yards per game and forced nine fumbles on the season. Before coaching at Kentucky, Buh made his second stint in the Pac-12 at California, serving as the defensive coordinator and linebackers coach. He spent the 2012 season with Bielema at Wisconsin coaching linebackers and helped the defense rank 15th in the nation in total defense.

Buh spent the 2010 and 2011 seasons at Nevada as the defensive coordinator and linebackers coach when he helped the Wolf Pack defense improve from 96th nationally to 52nd in total defense. He spent the three seasons before Nevada at Stanford, first serving as the linebackers coach, before being promoted to co-defensive coordinator for his final two seasons. He helped guide the Cardinal to the Sun Bowl in 2009, the program's first bowl game since 2001.

Buh played collegiately at Palomar College and then at Nevada in 1993 and 1994, helping his team capture a Big West Championship. He began his coaching career at Nevada, serving as a graduate assistant in 1997 and 1998. Buh then coached defensive backs and special teams for the Wolf Pack, before moving on to California in 2000 as a defensive administrative assistant. He spent the next four seasons coaching linebackers at San Diego State, before spending the 2006 season at Fresno State.

He earned his bachelor's degree in physical education at Nevada in 1996. A native of Escondido, California, Buh and his wife, Kelly, have two sons, Luke and Logan.

## THE BUH FILE

### HOMETOWN

Escondido, California

### BIRTHDATE

June 20, 1973

### FAMILY

Wife: Kelly  
Sons: Luke and Logan

### EDUCATION

B.S., physical education – Nevada, 1996

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Nevada, 1993-94  
Palomar College, 1991-92

## BUH YEAR-BY-YEAR

2021-	Illinois	Linebackers
2020	Arizona	Outside Linebackers
2019	Rutgers	Defensive Coordinator
2016-18	Maryland	Defensive Coordinator
2015	Kentucky	Outside Linebackers/Co-Special Teams Coordinator
2013	California	Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers
2012	Wisconsin	Linebackers
2010-11	Nevada	Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers
2008-09	Stanford	Co-Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers
2007	Stanford	Linebackers
2006	Fresno State	Graduate Assistant
2002-05	San Diego State	Linebackers
2000-01	California	Defensive Administrative Assistant
1999	Nevada	Defensive Backs/Special Teams
1997-98	Nevada	Graduate Assistant (Defensive Backs)



# TERRANCE JAMISON

DEFENSIVE LINE

WISCONSIN, 2009

SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS

## THE JAMISON FILE

### HOMETOWN

Harvey, Illinois

### BIRTHDATE

April 30, 1987

### FAMILY

Wife: Ashley  
 Son: Jayce  
 Daughters: Ava and Mackenzie

### EDUCATION

B.S., agricultural business management – Wisconsin, 2009

M.S., educational leadership and policy analysis – Wisconsin, 2011

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Wisconsin, 2005-07

Terrance Jamison joined the Illinois football staff as defensive line coach in January 2021. Considered one of the top young coaches in the game, Jamison joined the Illini staff after one season at Purdue.

Jamison was a part of one of the best defensive turnarounds in the nation in 2021, helping Illinois to a 5-7 record and ranked wins over #7 Penn State and #20 Minnesota. Illinois' scoring defense (31st from 97th), third down defense (31st from 89th), and total defense (52nd from 114th) all improved more than 50 spots in the national rankings from 2020. The Illini made massive gains in the Big Ten defensive rankings, as well, jumping nine or more spots in scoring defense (4th from 14th), touchdowns allowed (t-3rd from 14th), yards allowed per game (5th from 14th), and passing yards allowed per game (1st from 10th). He led defensive tackles Keith Randolph and Jer'Zhan Newton to All-Big Ten honorable mention honors.

A two-time graduate of Wisconsin, Jamison played on the defensive line for the Badgers from 2005-07 under Bielema before knee injuries forced him to the sidelines, and combined to serve four seasons as a student assistant (2008-09), quality control assistant (2011) and a graduate assistant (2012). He spent the 2010 season as the defensive line coach at Edgewood High School of the Sacred Heart in Madison, Wisconsin.

Prior to making the move to Purdue in 2020, Jamison spent the 2019 season at Air Force in a similar role, where he helped the Falcons to an 11-2 record that included a 31-21 victory over Washington State in the Cheez-It Bowl. That Air Force defensive unit finished in the top 20 nationally in a number of categories,

including rushing defense (7th, 100.5), defensive touchdowns (12th, 3), total defense (17th, 319.6) and scoring defense (20th, 19.8).

Jamison also spent two seasons at Texas Tech (2017-18) and three seasons at Florida Atlantic (2014-16) prior to his stop at Air Force. He spent the 2013 season in a quality control role at California before earning his first full-time position at FAU.

Jamison has coached several outstanding players in his career, including 2015 C-USA Defensive Player of the Year Trey Hendrickson, multiple-Pro Bowler J.J. Watt at Wisconsin, fifth-round NFL Draft pick Broderick Washington at Texas Tech and George Karlaftis, who was a All-Big Ten second team lineman in 2020.

A native of Harvey, Illinois, who graduated from Thornton Township High School, Jamison has two degrees from Wisconsin, a bachelor's in agricultural business management (2009) and a master's in educational leadership and policy analysis (2011). He and his wife, Ashley, have two daughters, Ava and Mackenzie, and one son, Jayce.

## JAMISON YEAR-BY-YEAR

2021-	Illinois	Defensive Line
2020	Purdue	Defensive Line
2019	Air Force	Defensive Line
2017-18	Texas Tech	Defensive Line
2014-16	Florida Atlantic	Defensive Line
2013	California	Defensive Quality Control
2012	Wisconsin	Graduate Assistant/Linebackers
2011	Wisconsin	Defensive Quality Control
2010	Edgewood HS (Wis.)	Assistant Coach (Defensive Line)
2008-09	Wisconsin	Student Assistant (Defensive Line)



# AARON HENRY

## DEFENSIVE BACKS

### WISCONSIN, 2011

### SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS

#### THE HENRY FILE

##### HOMETOWN

Immokalee, Florida

##### BIRTHDATE

November 28, 1988

##### FAMILY

Wife: Camille

##### EDUCATION

B.S., business and consumer affairs – Wisconsin, 2011

M.S., sports management – Arkansas, 2015

##### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Wisconsin, 2007-11

Aaron Henry was named defensive backs coach at Illinois in January 2021. Henry, who was a standout player and coached under Bielema at both Wisconsin and Arkansas, moved to Champaign-Urbana after SEC, ACC and Big Ten stops at Vanderbilt, North Carolina State and Rutgers.

Henry was part of one of the best defensive turnarounds in the nation in 2021, helping Illinois to a 5-7 record and ranked wins over #7 Penn State and #20 Minnesota. Illinois' scoring defense (31st from 97th), third down defense (31st from 89th), and total defense (52nd from 114th) all improved more than 50 spots in the national rankings from 2020, thanks in large part to the Illini's improved pass defense. Illinois led the Big Ten in fewest passing yards allowed in Big Ten games, a jump of nine spots in the Big Ten rankings with 49.5 fewer passing yards allowed per game year-over-year. The Illini made massive gains in the overall Big Ten defensive rankings, as well, jumping nine or more spots in scoring defense (4th from 14th), touchdowns allowed (t-3rd from 14th), yards allowed per game (5th from 14th).

Cornerback Devon Witherspoon was an honorable mention All-Big Ten pick to lead the Illini position group. The cornerbacks position group stats improved in nearly every category from the year prior, including passes defended (2.08 from 1.25), TFLs (1.25 from 0.38), and sacks (2.0 from 0.0).

Henry played under Bielema at Wisconsin where he was an All-Big Ten first team defensive back, earning 32 starts from 2007-11, and helping lead the Badgers to consecutive Big Ten titles and Rose Bowl appearances as a junior and senior.

Henry spent the 2020 season as cornerbacks coach at Vanderbilt after three seasons at North Carolina State. He worked under Commodore and Wolfpack defensive coordinator Ted Roof at both schools, and helped NC State to a 9-3 record and Gator Bowl appearance in 2018. Henry has coached in three bowl games, including the 2018 Gator Bowl, 2017 Sun Bowl and 2015 Liberty Bowl.

Henry served as a secondary coach at NC State, starting with the Wolfpack as a safeties coach in 2017 and working with nickelbacks during the 2018 and 2019 seasons. The Wolfpack secondary registered 28 interceptions during Henry's tenure, including 14 picks in 2017, the most by a NC State defensive unit since 2011.

Henry's first full-time coaching position came in 2016 at Rutgers, where he served as defensive backs coach for head coach Chris Ash. That season, the Scarlet Knights ranked 18th nationally in pass defense. He began his coaching career in the SEC, serving as a defensive graduate assistant at Arkansas under Bielema in 2014 and 2015. In his final season at Arkansas, the Razorbacks captured five SEC victories and won six of their last seven games, including a victory in the Liberty Bowl.

Henry finished his Wisconsin playing career with seven interceptions, 23 defended passes and 181 career tackles. As a senior in 2011, Henry was a All-Big Ten first team performer and quarterfinalist for the LOTT IMPACT Trophy. He garnered four interceptions and 67 tackles that season. Henry also earned the Badgers' Big Ten Football Conference Sportsmanship Award. He was a All-Big Ten second team pick in 2010 as a junior. Henry appeared in 52 games, starting 32 times.

Henry was a three-time Academic All-Big Ten recipient. He earned a bachelor's degree in consumer affairs from Wisconsin in 2011. He completed a master's degree in sports management from Arkansas in 2015.

A native of Immokalee, Florida, Henry played football, basketball, baseball and ran track at Immokalee High School. As a wide receiver and defensive back, he helped Immokalee to the 2004 Florida state title and an undefeated regular season in 2006. He was an all-state football player, all-county basketball player, and state qualifier in track.

Henry and his wife, Camille, married in January 2022.

#### HENRY YEAR-BY-YEAR

2021-	Illinois	Defensive Backs
2020	Vanderbilt	Cornerbacks
2018-19	North Carolina State	Cornerbacks
2017	North Carolina State	Safeties
2016	Rutgers	Defensive Backs
2014-15	Arkansas	Graduate Assistant, Defense



# BEN MILLER

**SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR/TIGHT ENDS**

**AIR FORCE ACADEMY, 2002**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE MILLER FILE

### HOMETOWN

Cleveland, Ohio

### BIRTHDATE

August 18, 1979

### FAMILY

Wife: Meghan

Son: Lochlan

Daughters: Quinn and Kelley

### EDUCATION

B.S., management – Air Force Academy, 2002

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Air Force, 1998-2001

2002-03: Signed by the Cleveland Browns as a Free Agent Tight End/H-Back. Participated in OTAs and Training Camp, including preseason games while on Active Duty in the Air Force.

2004-05: Fullback/Long Snapper for the Cleveland Browns and Tight End/Long Snapper for the NFL Europe's Hamburg Sea Devils. Tight End/Fullback/Long Snapper for Philadelphia Eagles

Ben Miller was named Illinois football's special teams coordinator and tight ends coach in January 2021. Miller, who was diagnosed with colon cancer in February, will remain on a health-related leave through the 2022 season. He will stay in communication with the Illinois staff and student-athletes as much as possible while continuing his medical plan and treatments.

Miller coached one of the top special teams units in the nation and one of the best tight end duos in the Big Ten in 2021, helping Illinois to a 5-7 record and ranked wins over #7 Penn State and #20 Minnesota. Illinois' veteran special teams unit, led by All-Big Ten performers K James McCourt and P Blake Hayes, helped the Illini finish #1 in the nation in special teams, according to ESPN's SP+ rating. McCourt tied a program record with four 50+-yard field goals and two-time Big Ten Special Teams Player of the Week Hayes left Champaign with nearly every punting record in Illini history, including landing half of his punts inside the 20 for an Illini-record 34 punts inside the 20.

Illinois' tight end duo of Luke Ford and Daniel Barker was a highlight of the Illini offense in 2021. The combo helped Illinois produce the 14th 1,000-yard rusher in program history in Chase Brown, and Barker was second on the team with five touchdowns and broke Illinois' career receiving touchdowns record by a tight end with 11.

A 2002 Air Force Academy graduate, Miller spent the 2006 season as the offensive graduate assistant at Illinois under Ron Zook before returning to the Academy. He spent his first five seasons at Air Force coaching the tight ends, then nine seasons as the running backs

coach. Miller also had 13 years coaching the Air Force specialists, including the previous 10 as the special teams coordinator before arriving for his second stint in Champaign.

His nine years working with Falcon running backs was highly successful. He oversaw the progress of first-year starter Cody Getz, who rushed for 1,248 yards in 2012. Miller also coached Jacobi Owens, who posted back-to-back 1,000-yard rushing seasons in 2014 and 2015, while topping 3,000 yards in his career.

Miller was an all-conference offensive lineman for the Falcons, starting at left tackle as a junior and senior. After completing his collegiate career, Miller signed a contract with the Cleveland Browns, where he was used as a fullback, tight end, and long snapper. In the fall of 2005, he joined the practice squad for the Philadelphia Eagles

Miller served as a graduate assistant coach at the Academy from 2002-03. He also spent one year in the ManTech Division at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, before transitioning to the Air Force Reserve in May 2004. During the NFL offseason, he worked as a public affairs officer doing recruiting and public relations activities for the Air Force.

Miller is married to the former Meghan Carney. The couple has two daughters, Quinn and Keeley, and a son, Lochlan.

## MILLER YEAR-BY-YEAR

2021-	Illinois	Tight Ends
2012-20	Air Force	Special Teams Coordinator/Running Backs
2008-11	Air Force	Tight Ends/Specialists
2007	Air Force	Tight Ends
2006	Illinois	Graduate Assistant, Offense
2002-03	Air Force	Graduate Assistant



# CORY PATTERSON

**RUNNING BACKS**

**LINDENWOOD, 2002**

**FOURTH SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE PATTERSON FILE

### HOMETOWN

St. Louis, Missouri

### BIRTHDATE

December 19, 1980

### FAMILY

Wife: Tiffany

Daughters: Nyla and Nori

### EDUCATION

B.S., finance – Lindenwood, 2002

Patterson is in his fifth season as an assistant coach at Illinois in 2022. Illinois head football coach Bret Bielema retained Patterson on his coaching staff, changing roles to running backs coach. Patterson spent his first three seasons with the Illini as tight ends coach after three seasons as the highly successful head coach at Trinity Catholic High School in St. Louis.

In Patterson's first season as running backs coach, he coached Chase Brown to become the program's 14th 1,000-yard rusher and earn All-Big Ten third team honors. Brown ran for 223 yards on 33 carries and one touchdown at #7 Penn State to help Illinois win the longest game in college football history (20-18, 9 OT) and had a career-best 257 rushing yards against Charlotte, to join Illini legends Howard Griffith (1990) and Rashard Mendenhall (2007) as the only players in program history with multiple 200-yard rushing games in a single season. Brown's 223 rushing yards at #7 Penn State were the most ever by an opponent at Beaver Stadium and he added another 147 yards on the ground in a road win at #20 Minnesota. Patterson also coached true freshman Josh McCray to two 100-yard games in a breakout season. McCray ran for 142 yards at #7 Penn State, the most rushing yards ever by an Illini true freshman against a ranked opponent and had a career-high 167 yards on a career-high 24 attempts at Purdue.

Patterson helped Illinois to the 2019 Redbox Bowl, the program's first bowl in five years, after two of the most memorable victories in Illini history. Illinois clinched bowl eligibility with a 37-34 win at Michigan State in the biggest comeback in program history. Illinois trailed 28-3 in the second quarter and 31-10 entering the fourth to tie the largest fourth-quarter comeback in a Big Ten game in the last 40 seasons by outscoring Michigan State 27-3 in the fourth quarter, including tight end Daniel Barker's game-winning touchdown reception from Brandon Peters with five seconds left. Illinois' 27 fourth-quarter points were the most by an

opponent in the 96-year, 544-game history of Michigan State's Spartan Stadium.

Patterson also helped coach the Fighting Illini to one of the biggest upsets in Big Ten history with a 24-23 victory over No. 6 Wisconsin on Oct. 19, 2019. Illinois entered the day as a 30-point underdog before James McCourt's 39-yard field goal as time expired sent Illini fans rushing to the Memorial Stadium field in one of the greatest Homecoming scenes in University of Illinois history. The Wisconsin victory sprung Illinois to four straight Big Ten wins, the first four-game Big Ten winning streak for the Fighting Illini since the 2001 Big Ten Championship team finished the regular season with seven straight conference victories. Illinois finished the 2019 regular season 6-6 and 4-5 in the Big Ten.

Patterson has been key to Illinois' recruiting efforts, specifically in St. Louis. Two of the highest rated recruits in the modern era have signed from St. Louis since the arrival of Patterson. Isaiah Williams, Patterson's quarterback at Trinity, and Shammond Cooper, Trinity's star linebacker, both came to Champaign-Urbana in 2019 as four-star prospects and top 150 recruits in the nation.

Under Patterson, Trinity Catholic established itself as one of the top high school programs in St. Louis and the state of Missouri. He was named the Archdiocesan Athletic Association (AAA) Conference Coach of the Year all three seasons.

Patterson compiled a record of 27-6 in his three seasons, and led the Titans to the 2016 Missouri state Class 2 title game. The 2017 squad was 9-1, ending their season in the state semifinals.

Patterson served as an assistant coach at Christian Brothers College High School in St. Louis from 2009-12 before becoming Trinity's staff as an offensive coordinator (2013-14) then head coach. He helped lead Christian Brothers to a state championship and two district championships.

Prior to entering coaching, Patterson worked in corporate accounting in St. Louis. While an accountant, Patterson volunteered to coach a youth football team at a local Boys & Girls Club in the evenings. His passion to mentor young athletes drew him out of the corporate world and into coaching and teaching as a full-time profession.

Patterson is a 2002 finance graduate of Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri. His collegiate playing career was cut short by a leg injury.

Patterson and his wife Tiffany have two daughters, Nyla and Nori.

## PATTERSON YEAR-BY-YEAR

2021-	Illinois	Running Backs
2018-20	Illinois	Tight Ends
2015-17	Trinity Catholic HS (St. Louis, Mo.)	Head Coach
2013-14	Trinity Catholic HS (St. Louis, Mo.)	Offensive Coordinator
2009-12	Christian Brothers College HS (St. Louis, Mo.)	Assistant Coach



# SEAN SNYDER

**SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR/SPECIALISTS COACH**

**KANSAS STATE, 1994**

**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE SNYDER FILE

### HOMETOWN

Greenville, Texas

### BIRTHDATE

September 21, 1969

### FAMILY

Wife: Wanda  
 Daughter: Katherine  
 Sons: Tate and Matthew

### EDUCATION

B.S., money and banking – Kansas State, 1994

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Iowa, 1989  
 Kansas State, 1991-92

Veteran Power-5 special teams coordinator Sean Snyder joined the Illinois staff as special teams coordinator/specialists coach in 2022. Snyder comes to Champaign from USC, where he spent the 2020 and 2021 seasons as special teams coordinator.

Snyder spent more than two decades at Kansas State, where his father, Bill Snyder, was a legendary head coach. Snyder began at Kansas State as a part-time assistant coach in 1994 and 1995, then served as director of football operations from 1996 to 1998, assistant athletic director for football operations in 1999 and 2000, associate athletic director in 2001 and senior associate athletic director from 2002 to 2010. He served as special teams coordinator/associate head coach from 2011-18 and special teams analyst in 2019 before moving to USC.

During his tenure, Kansas State ranked in the Top 15 of the ESPN Special Teams Efficiency rating 5 times, including first in 2017, second in 2015 and third in 2012. The Wildcats also were in the Top 25 of the Football Outsiders Special Teams Rating 6 times since 2011, including first in 2017, third in 2014 and 2019 and sixth in 2012. Snyder was named the national Special Teams Coordinator of the Year in 2015 by FootballScoop and Phil Steele and in 2017 by Phil Steele.

In 2020, USC's special teams were ranked No.1 nationally by Football Outsider and the Trojans were in the national Top 25 in NCAA statistics in kickoff return defense (10th at 17.0) and net punting (25th at 40.8). True freshman Parker Lewis was 20th nationally in field goals (1.6), Gary Bryant Jr. (also a true freshman)

was 22nd in kickoff returns (26.2), Ben Griffith's 46.4 punting average was the highest by a Trojan since 2003 and snapper Damon Johnson was a Mannelly Award finalist.

Under Snyder, Kansas State's special teams units set or tied 8 team records and 20 individual marks. He coached 4 Big 12 Special Teams Players of the Year, including 3 consecutive (returners Tyler Lockett in 2013 and 2014, Morgan Burns in 2015 and Joshua

Youngblood in 2019). Lockett, who now plays for the Seattle Seahawks, was an All-American first team kickoff returner in 2011 and punt returner in 2014. Burns earned All-American first team honors in 2015 as a kick returner when he led the country in kickoff return touchdowns (4). Youngblood was a Freshman All-American first teamer in 2019 when he ran back 3 kickoffs for TDs and helped Kansas State top the nation in kickoff return average (29.5). Placekicker Matthew McCrane was a Freshman All-American first teamer in 2014 and All-Big 12 first team pick in 2017, while kicker Jack Cantele made the All-Big 12 first team in 2015. Kick returner Byron Pringle was All-Big 12 first team in 2016 and returner D.J. Reed was so honored in 2017.

Snyder was a consensus All-American and All-Big Eight first team punter under his father at Kansas State as a senior in 1992, averaging 44.7 yards per punt. He was the Big Eight Defensive Newcomer of the Year as a 1991 junior, with a 40.5 punting average. His 43.0 career punting average was a school record. He played in the 1992 Blue-Gray Game. He was inducted into Kansas State's inaugural Ring of Honor Class in 2002 and into its Athletics Hall of Fame in 2016.

Snyder redshirted at Iowa in 1988, then saw action in two games for the Hawkeyes as a redshirt freshman in 1989 before transferring to Kansas State. He earned his bachelor's degree from Kansas State in money and banking in 1994.

Snyder signed as a free agent with the Phoenix Cardinals in 1993 and the San Diego Chargers in 1994.

He and his wife Wanda raised a daughter Katherine and sons Tate and Matthew. They have five grandchildren: Katherine and her husband Colton have three kids, DJ, Declan, and Murphy, and Tate and his wife Nikki have two children, Pearce and Presley.

## SNYDER YEAR-BY-YEAR

2022-	Illinois	Special Teams Coordinator/Specialists
2020-21	USC	Special Teams Coordinator
2019	Kansas State	Special Teams Analyst
2011-18	Kansas State	Special Teams Coordinator/Associate Head Coach
2002-10	Kansas State	Senior Associate Athletic Director
2001	Kansas State	Associate Athletic Director
1999-2000	Kansas State	Assistant Athletic Director for Football Operations
1996-98	Kansas State	Director of Football Operations
1994-95	Kansas State	Part-Time Assistant



**THE STAFF**



# VINCENT JEFFERIES JR.

**OFFENSIVE GRADUATE ASSISTANT**

**FLORIDA A&M, 2017**

**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE JEFFERIES FILE

### HOMETOWN

Garner, North Carolina

### EDUCATION

B.S., psychology – Florida A&M, 2017

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Santa Rosa Junior College, 2015  
Florida A&M, 2016-17

Vincent Jefferies Jr. is in his first season as an offensive graduate assistant at Illinois in 2022. Jefferies spent the 2021 season at North Carolina State, working as an offensive assistant.

Jefferies started his coaching career at the high school level at Garner Magnet in his hometown of Garner, North Carolina. At Garner, Jefferies was the quarterbacks coach and passing game coordinator.

Jefferies finished his playing career at Florida A&M in 2016-17. He was a quarterback and graduated from Florida A&M with a degree in psychology. After graduation, Jefferies participated in the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Spirit of America Bowl where he scored the game-winning touchdown.

He also played one season at Santa Rosa Junior College, where he threw for 1,920 yards and 12 touchdowns in 10 games.

Jefferies graduated from Florida A&M's College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities with an undergraduate degree in psychology and a cumulative GPA of 3.5. He was a semifinalist for the 2017 William V. Campbell Trophy, the most prestigious academic award in college football.



# TYLER KING

**OFFENSIVE GRADUATE ASSISTANT**

**BOWLING GREEN, 2018**

**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE KING FILE

### HOMETOWN

Lorain, Ohio

### EDUCATION

B.S., business administration and management – Bowling Green, 2018

M.S., leadership – Ottawa, 2020

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Bowling Green, 2016-18

Tyler King is in his first season as an offensive graduate assistant at Illinois in 2022. King comes to Champaign following a season as an offensive analyst at Northern Colorado.

King played college football at Bowling Green before starting his coaching career. He spent two seasons as an offensive line graduate assistant at Ottawa University (NAIA) in 2018 and 2019 following his playing career, then spent the 2020-21 season as an offensive quality control coach at Fordham.

King is a member of the American Football Coaches Association Minority Issues Committee.

King is a native of Lorain, Ohio, and graduate of St. Edward High School. He graduated from Bowling Green State University with a bachelor's degree in business administration and management, before finishing a master's degree in leadership from Ottawa University.



# JOE DINEEN

**DEFENSIVE GRADUATE ASSISTANT**

**KANSAS, 2018**

**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Joe Dineen is in his first season as a defensive graduate assistant at Illinois in 2022. Dineen was an All-American linebacker at Kansas before a stint in the NFL.

Dineen comes to Champaign from SMU, where he was a defensive graduate assistant under then-SMU defensive coordinator Kevin Kane. Dineen reunites with Kane and will work closely with Kane's unit, the outside linebackers.

At Kansas, Dineen was a 2018 consensus All-American, AP All-American and two-time Sports Illustrated All-American. Dineen was also an All-Big 12 first-team selection and three-time team captain.

Dineen twice led the NCAA in solo tackles per game and was the Big 12 leader in tackles and tackles per loss.

Off the field, he was recognized as a Senior Class All-American, a Ronnie Lott IMPACT Award and Jason Witten Man of the Year Semifinalist and a nominee for the Allstate Good Works Team. Dineen was also a member of the Big 12 All-Academic Team, a two-time member of the Big 12 Commissioners Honor Roll and a member of the Athletic Directors Honor Roll.

Dineen is a native of Lawrence, Kansas, and starred at Free State High School. He graduated from Kansas in 2018 with a degree in business management and leadership.

## THE DINEEN FILE

### HOMETOWN

Lawrence, Kansas

### EDUCATION

B.A., business management and leadership – Kansas, 2018



# PRESTON GORDON

**DEFENSIVE GRADUATE ASSISTANT**

**RICE, 2018**

**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Preston Gordon is in his second season as a defensive graduate assistant at Illinois in 2022. Gordon was a standout defensive lineman at Rice and Texas Tech before signing professionally with the Atlanta Falcons and Frisco Fighters (Indoor Football League).

Gordon played his first four seasons of college football at Rice before transferring to Texas Tech for his senior year in 2018. He had 21 tackles and 2.5 TFLs while playing in all 12 games and starting three at nose tackle.

Gordon ended his Rice career with 28 starts on the defensive line in three seasons, totaling 87 tackles and 17.5 TFLs. He came to Rice out of Frisco Heritage High School in Frisco, Texas, where he finished his career with 209 tackles, 28 sacks, and 34 TFLs.

Gordon earned a bachelor's degree in sports management from Rice in 2018. He finished a master's degree in interdisciplinary studies at Texas Tech in 2019.

## THE GORDON FILE

### HOMETOWN

McKinney, Texas

### EDUCATION

B.S., sports management – Rice, 2018

M.S., interdisciplinary studies – Texas Tech, 2019

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Texas Tech, 2018  
Rice, 2014-17



# DANNY CAMERON

**OFFENSIVE QUALITY CONTROL**  
**NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS, 2019**  
**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Danny Cameron is in his first season in offensive quality control at Illinois in 2022. Cameron comes to Champaign from McNeese State, where he was a defensive analyst.

Cameron is a former Big Ten player at Indiana, where he was a quarterback for three seasons. He finished his playing career at New Mexico Highlands of Division II as a two-year starting quarterback, throwing for 4,570 yards and 36 touchdowns for the Cowboys.

Cameron is a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and played at Catholic High School. He graduated from New Mexico Highlands in 2019.

## THE CAMERON FILE

### HOMETOWN

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

### EDUCATION

B.S. – New Mexico Highlands, 2019

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Indiana, 2014-16

New Mexico Highlands, 2017-18



# ADAM KLEFFNER

**OFFENSIVE ANALYST**  
**PORTLAND STATE, 2011**  
**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Adam Kleffner is in his second season as an offensive analyst at Illinois in 2022. He joined the Fighting Illini from Stephen F. Austin, where he spent the 2020 season as an offensive assistant.

Kleffner was at Stephen F. Austin for one year after serving as an assistant offensive line coach for the Dallas Cowboys in 2019. The Cowboys 2019 offensive line featured Pro Bowl LT Tyron Smith, C Travis Frederick, and RG Zack Martin.

Kleffner previously worked as an offensive quality control/analyst at Missouri in 2018 and four seasons at his alma mater Portland State in various offensive coaching positions. He was a quality control coach at Portland State from 2012-13, then left coaching for the business world, before rejoining Portland State as a graduate assistant in 2016, then offensive line coach in 2017.

Kleffner lettered four years at Portland state (2008-11) and made 20 career starts on the offensive line with the Vikings, including most of his final two seasons. He earned a degree in business management at Portland State.

## THE KLEFFNER FILE

### HOMETOWN

Portland, Oregon

### EDUCATION

B.S., business management –  
 Portland State, 2011

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Portland State, 2008-11



# COURTNEY MESSINGHAM

**OFFENSIVE ANALYST**

**NORTHERN IOWA, 1990**

**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Veteran college football coach Courtney Messingham joined the Illinois staff as an offensive analyst in 2022. Messingham comes to Champaign from Kansas State, where he spent the previous three seasons as offensive coordinator.

Messingham brings 17 years of collegiate offensive coordinator experience to Illinois, including 11 years in Division I and five years at the Power-5 level. In Messingham's 13 total years of FBS assistant experience, he has helped coach 10 teams to bowl eligibility. Messingham helped coach Kansas State to three bowl eligible seasons, where he arrived from North Dakota State after two ultra-successful seasons with the Bison.

Messingham's offense reset the North Dakota State and Missouri Valley Football Conference record books in 2018, a year that the Bison went 15-0 and won their FCS-record seventh national championship. The Bison set the school and conference marks for points scored (622), touchdowns scored (80), rushing offense (4,293), total offense (7,076) and rushing touchdowns (54). Additionally, the 2018 Bison set a school record for yards per play (7.37) and ranked second in yards per rush (6.41).

Messingham went to North Dakota State from Montana State, where he was the offensive coordinator in 2016. That was preceded by stops at Indiana (2014-15), Iowa State (2009-13), Missouri State (2008), and Southern Miss (2005-07). Messingham spent two seasons as head coach at Upper Iowa in 2003 and 2004 while the Peacocks were reclassifying to Division II, before he moved to the FBS ranks. Prior to Upper Iowa, Messingham worked with teams at Missouri State (1999-2002), Truman State (1995-98), Iowa Lakes Community College (1993-94), and St. Ambrose (1990-92).

A native of Waterloo, Iowa, Messingham graduated from Northern Iowa with a bachelor's degree in manufacturing and mechanical design in 1990 and earned a master's degree in business administration from St. Ambrose in 1992. He was a quarterback and defensive back at Northern Iowa from 1985-89.

Messingham and his wife, Carol, have one daughter, Taylor.

## THE MESSINGHAM FILE

### HOMETOWN

Waterloo, Iowa

### FAMILY

Wife: Carol

Daughter: Taylor

### EDUCATION

B.S., manufacturing and mechanical design – Northern Iowa, 1990

M.S., business administration – St. Ambrose, 1992

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Northern Iowa, 1985-89



# TAYLOR REED

**OFFENSIVE ANALYST**

**CENTRAL ARKANSAS, 2015**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Taylor Reed is in his second season at Illinois and first as an offensive analyst. Reed spent the 2021 season as an offensive graduate assistant, helping Illinois to two top-25 ranked wins.

Reed spent the 2019 and 2020 seasons at Auburn as an offensive graduate assistant, working primarily with wide receivers and helping Auburn to Citrus Bowl and Outback Bowl berths.

Reed initially worked under Bielema at Arkansas from 2016-17, working primarily with the quarterbacks. At Arkansas, Reed helped coach Austin Allen, the SEC's top passer in 2016, who threw for 3,430 yards, including a league-best 2,291 yards in SEC play, and totaled 25 touchdown passes.

Reed joined the Razorbacks after lettering at Central Arkansas at quarterback from 2013-15, where he threw for 1,809 yards and 14 touchdowns in 23 games over three seasons. He

began his college career in 2011 at Memphis, starting nine of 11 games and throwing for 1,690 yards and 10 touchdowns. Following that season, he transferred to Arkansas, sat out the 2012 season due to NCAA transfer rules, then went on to join Central Arkansas in August 2013.

Reed rejoined Central Arkansas as running backs coach in 2018 before moving to Auburn from 2019-20.

A native of El Dorado, Arkansas, Reed graduated from Central Arkansas with a bachelor's degree in business administration. He and his wife Shayne married in July 2019 and they have twin boys, Bo and Tommy.

## THE REED FILE

### HOMETOWN

El Dorado, Arkansas

### FAMILY

Wife: Shayne

Sons: Bo and Tommy

### EDUCATION

B.A., business administration – Central Arkansas, 2015

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Memphis, 2011

Arkansas, 2012

Central Arkansas, 2013-15



# GRANT O'BRIEN

**DEFENSIVE ANALYST**

**NORTHERN ARIZONA, 2013**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Grant O'Brien is in his second season as a defensive analyst at Illinois in 2022. O'Brien joined the Illini after three seasons as a defensive quality control analyst at Missouri.

O'Brien helped Missouri earn bids to the 2020 Music City Bowl and the 2018 Liberty Bowl during his time in Columbia. He primarily worked with the defensive backs for the Tigers.

O'Brien came to Missouri after stints at Florida International (2017), Arizona Christian (2015-16), and Northern Arizona (2013-14). He was a part of two league titles at Arizona Christian in 2015 and 2016 as defensive coordinator, then helped Florida International reach the Gasparilla Bowl in 2017 while working with the defensive line. O'Brien started at his alma mater Northern Arizona as the defensive graduate assistant, coaching the nickels/outside linebackers from 2013-14.

O'Brien played collegiately at Northern Arizona University, contributing as a defensive back and on special teams, following two seasons at Glendale Community College (Ariz.). During his time at Glendale, he played quarterback and defensive back and was selected as a special teams captain, helping the Gauchos win back-to-back Valley of the Sun Bowls. O'Brien was an All-Academic selection at Northern Arizona University and helped the team to an FCS playoff berth in 2012. He graduated from Northern Arizona University in 2013 with a degree in secondary education history, before earning a master's degree from NAU in educational leadership in 2015.

## THE O'BRIEN FILE

### HOMETOWN

Phoenix, Arizona

### EDUCATION

B.A., secondary education history – Northern Arizona, 2013

M.A., education leadership – Northern Arizona, 2015

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Glendale Community College (Ariz.), 2008-10  
Northern Arizona, 2011-12



# GREG FROELICH

**SPECIAL TEAMS ANALYST**

**MICHIGAN, 2017**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Greg Froelich is in his second season as a special teams analyst at Illinois in 2022. Froelich came to Illinois from Michigan, where he was a special teams and running backs analyst from 2017-20.

Froelich helped Michigan produce some of the top special teams units during his four years as an analyst, including a No. 2 ranking among special teams units in the nation in 2019 according to Football Outsiders.

Froelich was a two-time letterman at Michigan as an offensive lineman and fullback from 2013-17. He was a 2017 and 2018 Academic All-Big Ten selection and graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in political science in 2017. Froelich completed a master's degree in public policy in 2019.

## THE FROELICH FILE

### HOMETOWN

Maplewood, New Jersey

### EDUCATION

B.S., political science – Michigan, 2017

M.S., public policy – Michigan, 2019

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Michigan, 2013-17



# RYAN SIMERSON

**DEFENSE QUALITY CONTROL**

**CARROLL, 2020**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Ryan Simerson joined the University of Illinois staff as a football analyst in 2021. He is assigned to defensive quality control in 2022.

Previously, Simerson worked as a student assistant at his alma mater Carroll University for two seasons. He was on the Carroll football team before joining the staff.

Simerson graduated from Carroll with a bachelor's degree in sports and recreation management, while also minoring in coaching.

## THE SIMERSON FILE

### HOMETOWN

Cudahy, Wisconsin

### EDUCATION

B.S., sports and recreation management – Carroll, 2020



# ALEX PANOS

**DEFENSE QUALITY CONTROL**

**ST. THOMAS, 2022**

**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Alex Panos joined the University of Illinois staff, working with defensive quality control, in 2022.

Panos played college football at St. Thomas (Minn.), where he was a defensive lineman. He was a member of the prestigious NFF Hampshire Honor Society as a senior in 2021. He graduated with a degree in communication and journalism.

Panos is a native of Hartland, Wisconsin, where he helped Arrowhead High School to three state title game appearances.

Panos' father, Joe, was an all-American at the University of Wisconsin and captain of the 1993-94 Rose Bowl team. His brother, George, played college football at Wisconsin.

## THE PANOS FILE

### HOMETOWN

Hartland, Wisconsin

### EDUCATION

B.S., communication and journalism – St. Thomas, 2022

CHIEF OF STAFF



# MARK TAURISANI

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS, FOOTBALL CHIEF OF STAFF**

**NEW YORK AT FREDONIA, 2003**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE TAURISANI FILE

### HOMETOWN

Utica, New York

### FAMILY

Wife: Tara

Daughters: Rose, Avery

### EDUCATION

B.S., sociology – State University of New York at Fredonia, 2003

M.S., sport administration – Louisville, 2005

Mark Taurisani was named Assistant Athletics Director/Chief of Staff for the Fighting Illini football program in January 2021. He enters his second season in 2022.

Taurisani oversees much of the administrative aspects of the football program along with the day-to-day needs of Bret Bielema and the football program.

Taurisani worked with Bielema in each of his 14 years as a head coach and comes to Illinois after three seasons as the Director of Operations for Michigan football. He spent five seasons with Bielema at Arkansas, where he worked as Director of Football Operations, including the last four as Assistant Athletics Director. Prior to his stop in Fayetteville, Taurisani spent seven seasons at Wisconsin, including the final four as Director of Football Operations. He had been football operations coordinator in 2008-09, following two seasons as an operations assistant in 2006-07.

At Wisconsin, Taurisani was part of three Big Ten Championship-winning teams and seven bowl trips, including the 2010, 2011 and 2012 Rose Bowls. He has coordinated 12 bowl trips throughout his career, and has served as a member of the Rose Bowl Advisory Committee since 2010.

A native of Utica, New York, Taurisani graduated from State University of New York at Fredonia in 2003 with a bachelor's degree in sociology and a minor in sports and exercise, earning all-conference first team honors as captain of the baseball team. He spent the summer of 2005 as a training camp assistant with the Seattle Seahawks and earned a master's degree in sport administration from Louisville in 2005.

Taurisani and his wife, Tara, have two daughters, Rose and Avery.

## STRENGTH &amp; CONDITIONING



# TANK WRIGHT

**DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING**

**ARKANSAS, 2012**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE WRIGHT FILE

### HOMETOWN

Memphis, Tennessee

### FAMILY

Wife: Ashley  
Sons: Quinten, Tank Jr.

### EDUCATION

Bachelor's of Science and Arts –  
Arkansas, 2012

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Arkansas, 2008-12

Tenarius "Tank" Wright was named Director of Football Strength and Conditioning in January 2021. Wright came to Illinois after serving seven seasons on strength and conditioning staffs at Arkansas and Michigan and a stint as the defensive line coach at Army West Point during the 2020 season.

In 2020, Wright helped Army lead the nation in total defense and win the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy with victories over Navy and Air Force.

Named one of college football's rising stars in 2019, Wright made the move to Army after serving as the Associate Director of Football Strength and Conditioning at Michigan for the 2018 and 2019 seasons, where he helped coach and mentor four first-round draft picks, one second-round pick, six third-round draft picks, one fourth-round pick and 12 picks from the fifth-seventh rounds.

Prior to his time at Michigan, Wright was the Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach at his alma mater, Arkansas, from 2014-17, where he worked on Bielema's staff for the first time. Wright helped Arkansas produce one first-round pick, one second-round pick, two fourth-round picks, and nine picks from the fifth-seventh rounds.

Wright was a standout for the Razorbacks from 2008-12 as a linebacker/defensive end, posting nine quarterback sacks and 20 tackles for loss and serving as team captain as a senior in 2012. He was named SEC Defensive Lineman of the Week after Arkansas' 47-19 win over Texas A&M at Cowboys Stadium for his three tackles, two TFLs, one sack and two forced fumbles.

Wright was signed as an undrafted free agent by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers before trying out for the Kansas City Chiefs in a rookie mini-camp and spent time with the Montreal Alouettes of the Canadian Football League before ultimately returning to his alma mater as a member of the strength and conditioning staff.

A native of Memphis, Tennessee, Wright graduated from Arkansas in 2012 with a bachelor's of science and arts.



# GC YERRY

**ASSISTANT STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING COACH**

**STONY BROOK, 2013**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

**THE YERRY FILE**

**HOMETOWN**

West Shokan, New York

**FAMILY**

Wife: Erika

**EDUCATION**

B.S., health science – Stony Brook, 2013

M.A., liberal studies – Stony Brook, 2015

GC Yerry joined the Illinois football strength staff in 2021 as an assistant strength and conditioning coach. Yerry came to Champaign after two years with the Army West Point football team in a similar role.

Prior to Army, Yerry was the Director of Athletic Performance at his alma mater Stony Brook for three years (2016-18). While in that role, Yerry oversaw an assistant director and graduate assistant, while also designing and implementing all strength and conditioning programs for the Seawolves football team. He coordinated team and individual nutritional counseling for 118 collegiate football athletes in accordance with a nutrition performance coach. Yerry also worked closely with the athletic training staff to create modified training programs for injured athletes and implemented return to play protocol for post-surgical athletes.

Prior to being promoted to the director, Yerry spent one year as the assistant director (2015) and two years as a graduate assistant at Stony Brook (2013-14).

As a graduate assistant, Yerry focused on all components of strength training and conditioning for softball, men's soccer,

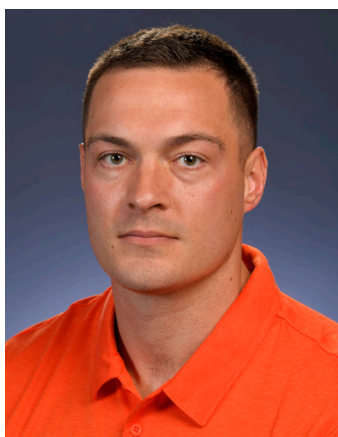
as well as men's and women's tennis. During that time, he oversaw baseball's conditioning programming, while also assisting with football, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's lacrosse, and volleyball.

After moving into the position of assistant director, Yerry's responsibilities shifted to all aspects of strength training and conditioning for women's basketball, men's lacrosse, baseball and volleyball, while also assisting with football.

He holds his certification as a CSCS (Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist), as well as being accredited as a USAW Sport Performance Coach.

Yerry received varsity letters in baseball and basketball from Stony Brook, including a College World Series appearance in 2012. He earned two degrees from the university – a bachelor's of science degree in health science in 2013 and a master's of arts in liberal studies in 2015.

Yerry and his wife Erika married in 2021.



# MATT MANNINGER

**ASSISTANT STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING COACH**

**NEBRASKA, 2013**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

**THE MANNINGER FILE**

**HOMETOWN**

Omaha, Nebraska

**FAMILY**

Wife: Danielle  
Son: JJ

**EDUCATION**

B.S., dietetics and nutrition/exercise and health sciences – Nebraska, 2013

M.S., human nutrition – Eastern Michigan, 2015

**PLAYING EXPERIENCE**

Nebraska, 2008-12

Matt Manninger joined Illinois as an assistant strength and conditioning coach in 2021. Manninger moved to Champaign after six years as an assistant strength coach at Vanderbilt.

Before joining the Vanderbilt program, Manninger worked as a strength intern at Maryland during the 2014 football season. He also served as a strength intern with Idaho student-athletes during the summer of 2014.

As an undergraduate student at Nebraska, Manninger earned a letter in 2012 as a linebacker with the Cornhuskers football team. He earned a bachelor's degree in dietetics and nutrition/exercise and health sciences from the University of Nebraska and later completed a master's in human nutrition from Eastern Michigan.

Manninger is certified through the Collegiate Strength and Conditioning Coaches Association.

He married Danielle Manninger (formerly Eckert) in May 2020. They had their first child, JJ, in June.



# NICK ELICONE

**ASSISTANT STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING COACH**

**WESTFIELD STATE, 2016**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Nick Elicone joined the Illinois football staff as an assistant strength and conditioning coach in 2021. Elicone came to the Illini after serving as the Lead Strength and Conditioning Coach at REEF Systems Corporation since May 2019.

At REEF Systems Corporation, Elicone was the Lead Strength Coach for 4-27 Field Artillery Battalion for the United States Army at Fort Bliss, the Strength and Conditioning Coach for 1/1 Ready First Brigade, and the Head Strength Coach for 2-3 Field Artillery Battalion for the United States Army at Fort Bliss. He designed programs and trained rehabilitating and injured soldiers to increase soldier readiness, as well as communicated program and weekly reports to Chain of Command and conducted educational classes daily for form and technique regarding ACFT equipment.

Elicone did internships at four FBS institutions before moving to REEF, including a one-year stint with the football program at Michigan from May 2018-May 2019. Elicone helped the Wolverines to a 10-3 record and co-Big Ten East

Division championship at 8-1 in Big Ten play. He previously interned at South Carolina, Alabama, and Connecticut.

Elicone was a two-year football letterwinner at Westfield State after a three-sport career at Hanover High School in Hanover, Massachusetts. He graduated from Westfield State University with a degree in exercise science and sports psychology.

He is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist and professional member of the National Strength and Conditioning Association.

## THE ELICONE FILE

### HOMETOWN

Hanover, Massachusetts

### EDUCATION

B.A., exercise science and sports psychology – Westfield State, 2016

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Westfield State, 2014-16



# COLIN KENYON

**ASSISTANT STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING COACH**

**MERRIMACK, 2019**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Colin Kenyon is in his second season as an assistant strength coach for the Fighting Illini in 2021. Kenyon came to Champaign from Army West Point, where he spent the 2019 and 2020 seasons on Army's strength and conditioning staff.

Kenyon is a 2019 graduate of Merrimack College, where he played defensive line and earned a bachelor's degree in exercise science. He interned at Army during the summers of 2018 and 2019 and also interned at Merrimack as a junior and senior, and Mike Boyle Strength in the summer of 2017.

During his time at Merrimack as an intern, Kenyon assisted coaches with all aspects of training and rehabilitation from injury and surgery with men's and women's lacrosse, field hockey, men's and women's hockey, men's and women's soccer as well as cross country and track and field.

Kenyon is a native of Duanesburg, N.Y.

## THE KENYON FILE

### HOMETOWN

Duanesburg, New York

### EDUCATION

B.S., exercise science – Merrimack, 2019

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Merrimack, 2015-18

## OPERATIONS



# PETE ROLEY

## DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

### WESTERN ILLINOIS, 2008

### SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS

#### THE ROLEY FILE

##### HOMETOWN

North Aurora, Illinois

##### FAMILY

Wife: Anna

Sons: Mason James, Colton Paul

##### EDUCATION

B.S., finance – Western Illinois, 2008

M.S., sports management – Western Illinois, 2010

##### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Western Illinois, 2004-07

Pete Roley was named Director of Football Operations at Illinois in July 2021. He enters his second season in 2022.

Roley came to Champaign from North Carolina State, where he had worked for the football program since 2013. He was NC State's Director of Football Operations since the spring of 2019, after previously serving as Associate Director of Football Operations beginning in 2015. Roley had previously served as the Wolfpack football team's Director of Social Media & Recruiting Marketing from 2013-15.

Roley served as the Assistant Director of Football Operations under Dave Doeren at Northern Illinois from 2011-13, and prior to that spent a season at NIU under head coach Jerry Kill handling all of the staff's video needs.

A 2008 graduate of Western Illinois University, Roley was the back-up quarterback for the Leathernecks. He earned his undergraduate degree in finance and spent a short time playing for the St. Louis Rage of the Arena Football League.

Roley coached the tight ends and worked on the operations staff at his alma mater while pursuing his master's degree. He graduated with a master's in sports management from Western Illinois in 2010.

The Aurora, Illinois, native and his wife, the former Anna Harkness, have two sons, Mason James and Colton Paul.

## RECRUITING AND PERSONNEL



## THE EMBLETON FILE

## HOMETOWN

Chesterland, Ohio

## FAMILY

Wife: Jessica

Children: Isabella, Gibson, Lenora

## EDUCATION

B.A., health and human kinetics –  
Ohio Wesleyan, 2012

## PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Ohio Wesleyan, 2008-11

# PATRICK EMBLETON

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL AND RECRUITING

### OHIO WESLEYAN, 2011

### 10TH SEASON AT ILLINOIS

Patrick Embleton is in his 10th season on the recruiting staff at Illinois in 2022. He was promoted to Executive Director of Personnel and Recruiting in February 2021 and enters his second season in the role.

Embleton oversees all recruiting efforts for the Fighting Illini, including high school and collegiate transfer efforts. He manages Illinois' recruiting team, which coordinates all on-campus admissions for incoming freshmen and transfers, performs preliminary transcript evaluations for those prospective student-athletes and manages all official and unofficial visits for football recruits. The recruiting department serves as football admissions coordinators and works closely with the academics staff in that pursuit, and also works with the compliance staff regarding the recruitability of prospective student-athletes.

Embleton served as Director of Recruiting at Illinois from 2015-20 following a stint as a player personnel/

football operations graduate assistant from 2013-14. In that role he assisted with on-campus recruiting including scheduling visits and itineraries, scheduling meetings with academic professors and arranging campus tours. He also coordinated recruiting travel for coaches and served as the program's liaison for NFL scouts. During his time as a graduate assistant, Embleton helped the Fighting Illini bring in the No. 6 recruiting class in the Big Ten in 2014.

Prior to coming to Illinois, Embleton was the wide receivers coach and assistant academic coordinator at Division III Ohio Wesleyan University. He earned a bachelor of arts in health and human kinetics from Ohio Wesleyan in 2012 and was a four-year starter at tight end for the Battling Bishops from 2008-11, earning All-NCAC honors and serving as team captain in 2011.

Embleton and his wife, Jessica, have three children, Isabella, Gibson, and Lenora.



## THE McNEAL FILE

## HOMETOWN

Chicago, Illinois

## EDUCATION

B.S., communications – Northern  
Illinois, 2013

M.S., sports management – Northern  
Illinois, 2015

## PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Northern Illinois, 2011-13

# NATE McNEAL

## DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL

### NORTHERN ILLINOIS, 2013

### FIFTH SEASON AT ILLINOIS

Nate McNeal rejoined the Illinois staff in February 2021 as Director of Recruiting after serving as Director of High School Relations for the Illini from 2016-18. He was promoted to Director of Player Personnel in 2022 and will begin his second season of his second stint at Illinois - and fifth season overall.

McNeal spent the 2019 and 2020 seasons at Temple as Director of Player Personnel, overseeing all recruiting efforts for the Owls.

McNeal has deep ties to the state of Illinois, including playing and working on the football staff at his alma mater Northern Illinois. He spent three years on staff at NIU as a graduate assistant for football operations and two seasons for video before being promoted to director of player personnel for one season.

McNeal played at Northern Illinois from 2011-13. He played in 16 games, including 13 as a redshirt senior in 2013. McNeal helped the Huskies win the 2012 MAC championship and become the first MAC team to make a BCS bowl when they played in the Orange Bowl and the following year helped the 2013 Huskies to the Poinsettia Bowl.

McNeal graduated from Northern Illinois with a degree in communications in 2013 and completed a masters in sports management in 2015.



# JAY KAISER

**DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE PERSONNEL AND NFL LIAISON**

**BETHANY COLLEGE, 1997**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE KAISER FILE

### HOMETOWN

Liberal, Kansas

### FAMILY

Wife: Camille

Children: Karson, Payton

### EDUCATION

B.S., health and physical education – Bethany, 1997

M.S., physical education and health – Northwest Missouri State, 1998

Jay Kaiser joined the Illinois staff in February 2021 as Director of College Personnel and NFL Liaison. Kaiser develops and manages Illinois' collegiate personnel department, encompassing student-athlete oversight, development, and roster management, while also acting as the Illinois football team's liaison to the NFL and all other professional leagues and events, including the NFL Combine, and Pro Days. He also educates Illini student-athletes through the process to become a professional football player.

Kaiser joined Illinois with 16 years of collegiate experience, all in the Midwest, and 10 years in the NFL. He brings a strong relationship with the NFL league office to Champaign and a vast knowledge of the college-to-NFL process after recruiting and helping players like first-rounder Josh Freeman (Kansas State) and walk-on turned Super Bowl champion and Pro Bowler Jordy Nelson (Kansas State) during their collegiate careers.

Kaiser has worked with three National Football Foundation Hall of Fame coaches - Bill Snyder (Kansas State), Mel Tjeerdsma (Northwest Missouri State), and Dr. Ted Kessinger (Bethany College) - during his time in college

football. During Kaiser's time at Kansas State as Director of Recruiting Operations, he worked with Bret Bielema and the staff that helped the Wildcats win the 2003 Big 12 title.

Kaiser spent 10 seasons as an assistant to the head coach in the NFL, including a seven-year stint with the Miami Dolphins from 2012-18. He assisted head coaches Joe Philbin (2012-15), Dan Campbell (2015), and Adam Gase (2016-18) in organizing football operations for the Dolphins. Kaiser managed several elements of Miami's off-field agenda, involving the day-to-day schedule, player and staff communications and the football calendar, including the offseason programs, minicamps and training camp. Kaiser received his start as a student coach at Bethany College from 1993-96. He earned a bachelor's degree in health and physical education from Bethany in 1997 and added a master's degree in physical education and health from Northwest Missouri State in 1998. While on staff with Northwest Missouri State, Kaiser helped the program to an undefeated 15-0 NCAA Division II national title in 1998.

A native of Liberal, Kansas, Kaiser and his wife, Camille, have two children, Karson and Payton.



# PAT RYAN

**DIRECTOR OF ILLINOIS HIGH SCHOOL RELATIONS**

**SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE, 1986**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE RYAN FILE

### HOMETOWN

Metamora, Illinois

### FAMILY

Wife: Nancy

Children: Morgan, Sam, Audrey, Erin

### EDUCATION

B.S., physical education – Southeast Missouri State, 1986

Illinois High School Football Coaches Association Hall of Famer Pat Ryan was named the Illinois football team's Director of Illinois High School Relations in April 2021. Ryan joined the Illini following a 30-year head coaching career at Metamora High School.

One of the most decorated coaches in Illinois high school football history, Ryan led Metamora to seven state championship games, two state titles (2007, 2009), and a 268-75 (.781) record in 30 seasons. He has the 14th-most wins in Illinois high school history and the 11th most of any coach at one school. Ryan was inducted to the Illinois High School Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2016.

Ryan has spent most of his life at Metamora High School, first as the team's quarterback prior to his graduation in 1981. His coaching career started as a student assistant at Southeast Missouri State under Peoria native Bob Smith, before he came back to Metamora to be an assistant coach. He was an assistant at Metamora for three seasons before taking over the program for the next 30 years.

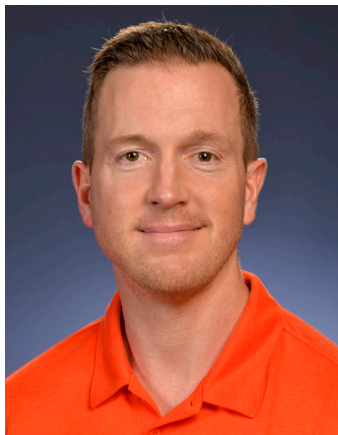
Ryan was a six-time Greater Peoria Area Football Coach of the Year, three-time Greater Peoria Area Sports Hall of Fame Male Coach of the Year, and three-time Shrine Game coach. He served as a trustee for the Illinois High School Football Coaches Association for 20

years, was the 1999 President of the Illinois High School Football Coaches Association, and was a member of the IHSA Football Advisory Board from 2010-13.

Ryan's teams went on an incredible run during a 16-year period from 1995-2010, winning 10+ games in 15 of the 16 years. Metamora appeared in seven state championship games, and won both of their state titles during the period, while featuring a style of play built on strong defenses and a physical running attack. Overall, Ryan's teams qualified for the IHSA playoffs in 24 of 30 seasons, had six undefeated regular seasons, and won 18 Mid-Illini Conference titles.

Ryan retired from his role as head football coach, department chair for physical education, health and driver's education, and assistant track and field coach at Metamora High School in 2020.

Ryan and his wife, Nancy, have four children: Morgan, Sam, Audrey, Erin.



# PATRICK PIERSON

**DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL BRANDING AND CREATIVE MEDIA**

**ROBERT MORRIS, 2004**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Patrick Pierson joined the Illinois staff in February 2021 as Director of Football Branding and Creative Media. Pierson oversees all branding of the football team, recruiting content, and leads the Illini's efforts on name, image, and likeness reform.

Pierson came to Champaign from Oregon, where he was Associate AD/Communications for the Ducks from 2018-20. Pierson was the main media contact for the Oregon football team that won back-to-back Pac-12 titles and the 2020 Rose Bowl while managing a communications staff of six that promoted Oregon's 20 athletic programs.

Prior to Oregon, Pierson was the Assistant AD/Communications at Arkansas from 2015-18, where he worked with current Illinois head coach Bret Bielema. He started at Arkansas as the Director of Men's Basketball Communications from 2013-15 before transitioning to lead the football team's communications efforts and oversee the athletic department's communications office.

Pierson moved to Arkansas from Florida Gulf Coast, where he was the primary communications contact for the 2012-13 FGCU men's basketball team that made a run to the NCAA Sweet Sixteen under the famous #DunkCity branding to become the first No. 15 seed in NCAA history to advance to the Sweet Sixteen. He was named the school's Director of Sports Information in 2010 before being promoted to Assistant AD for Communications in 2012.

Pierson was the main basketball contact and Sports Information Director at St. Bonaventure University from 2007-10. He started his career in college athletics as Assistant Sports Information Director for the Bonnies from 2004-07.

Pierson graduated from Robert Morris University in 2004 with a degree in sport management.

## THE PIERSON FILE

### HOMETOWN

Frewsburg, New York

### EDUCATION

B.S., sport management – Robert Morris, 2004



# DRAKE LEEPER

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL**

**ST. AMBROSE, 2017**

**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Drake Leeper is in his first season as assistant director of personnel at Illinois in 2022. Leeper comes to Champaign from Division II's McKendree University, where he was the linebackers coach and recruiting coordinator.

Leeper was with McKendree since 2018, starting as a graduate assistant with the running backs before moving to a full-time coaching role. Leeper arrived at McKendree after spending the 2017 season as the offensive and defensive line coach at Ottawa High School. There, he was responsible for installing the run and pass blocking schemes along with installing player improvement drills and managing the special teams unit. Leeper also gained valuable experience serving as an offensive coach for Don Beebe's House of Speed and with the Illinois Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

As a player, Leeper captured three consecutive state championships at Rochester High School from 2010-12. The Rockets' 2011 squad racked up the most total yards in Illinois High School Association (IHSA) history with nearly 6,800. A

two-time All-Conference honoree, Leeper earned second-team All-State accolades in 2012.

Leeper played three seasons as a defensive lineman at St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, and graduated with a bachelor's degree in physical education teaching in 2017. He finished a master's degree in education from McKendree in 2020.

## THE LEEPER FILE

### HOMETOWN

Rochester, Illinois

### EDUCATION

B.A., physical education teaching – St. Ambrose, 2017

M.A., education – McKendree, 2020

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

St. Ambrose, 2013-15



# CHIP VAUGHN

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL**

**WAKE FOREST, 2009**

**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE VAUGHN FILE

### HOMETOWN

Goldsboro, North Carolina

### FAMILY

Wife: Erin

Daughter: Luna Isabella

### EDUCATION

B.A., sociology and religion – Wake Forest, 2009

M.B.A., project management – Fayetteville State, 2019

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Wake Forest, 2004-08

New Orleans Saints, 2009

Indianapolis Colts, 2010-11

Chip Vaughn is in his first season with the Illinois football program in 2022. Vaughn comes to Champaign from the New York Jets, where he spent the last two seasons as a defensive assistant/assistant safeties coach.

Prior to the Jets, Vaughn was part of an Air Force team that finished the 2019 season ranked in the Top 25 with two wins over Power-5 teams, including Washington State in the Cheez-It Bowl. The defense finished 17th in total defense and seventh in rush defense, while the secondary saw three players selected to All-Mountain West Conference teams, one of which earned an undrafted free agent contract with the Arizona Cardinals.

Vaughn was selected to the 2020 American Football Coaches Association 35 Under 35 Coaches Leadership Institute. A Bill Walsh Diversity Coaching Fellowship coach with New Orleans during training camp in 2018, he was also one of 15 coaches selected to participate in the 2018 NFL-NCAA Coaches Academy.

A former fourth-round selection by New Orleans in 2009, Vaughn missed his rookie season, and the Saints' Super Bowl run, with an injury suffered in training camp. He appeared in three games the following season with Indianapolis before going on injured reserve and retiring the following year due to injuries while with Carolina.

A four-year defensive back at Wake Forest, Vaughn was named first team All-ACC as a senior and received honorable mention as a junior. He led the Demon Deacons in tackles his junior year and finished second as a senior, finishing his college career with 258 tackles, three interceptions, 22 pass breakups, four fumble recoveries, one forced fumble, and one fumble returned for a touchdown.

A native of Goldsboro, North Carolina, Vaughn double majored in sociology and religion at Wake Forest and is in the process of earning his MBA from Fayetteville State. He and his wife, Erin, have a daughter, Luna Isabella.



# MAYA GREEN

**DIRECTOR OF RECRUITING OPERATIONS**

**TOWSON, 2018**

**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE GREEN FILE

### HOMETOWN

Germantown, Maryland

### EDUCATION

B.S., sport and fitness administration – Towson, 2018

M.S., sport and fitness administration – Louisiana State, 2021

Maya Green joined the Illinois football staff as Director of Recruiting Operations in 2022. Green comes to Champaign from Cal, where she was the Director of Business Operations in 2021.

Green was a recruiting and operations assistant for the track and field program at LSU from 2019-21. She worked with budgets, facilitated travel plans, and worked on eligibility for over 90 student-athletes. Prior to LSU, Green was an undergraduate recruiting staff assistant at Towson for four years.

Green earned a bachelor's degree in sport and fitness administration from Towson in 2018. She earned a master's degree in sport and fitness administration from LSU in 2021.



# CONNOR HANNAN

**DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL GRAPHIC DESIGN**

**NORTHERN ILLINOIS, 2012**

**FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

## THE HANNAN FILE

### HOMETOWN

Palatine, Illinois

### EDUCATION

B.A., art— Northern Illinois, 2012

Connor Hannan joined the University of Illinois Football staff as the Director of Football Graphic Design in 2022. Hannan oversees graphic design for football recruiting, designing creative materials for prospective student-athletes, while assisting with creative materials for the program. Hannan also assists with photography for current and prospective student-athletes.

Hannan's design experience includes work in advertising, athletics and digital printing industries with companies such as Revolution Global and the United States Equestrian Federation. Hannan is an experienced photographer specializing in sport, portrait and concert photography. He has freelanced his design and photography talent throughout his career.

Hannan is a graduate of Northern Illinois University.

ATHLETIC TRAINING



# JEREMY BUSCH

**ASSISTANT ATHLETIC DIRECTOR FOR SPORTS MEDICINE, HEAD FOOTBALL ATHLETIC TRAINER  
IOWA, 2002**

**EIGHTH SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Jeremy Busch is in his eighth season as Head Football Athletic Trainer at the University of Illinois in 2022. He is responsible for managing all the healthcare needs of the Illinois football team. Busch supervises a staff of four certified and licensed athletic trainers with the Illini football team.

Previously, Busch served as the head football athletic trainer for Texas Tech University in 2014. He spent the previous two years at the University of Nebraska, as the assistant football athletic trainer/rehabilitation coordinator assisting with the year-round preventive care, immediate care for injured student-athletes at practice and games and reconditioning of injured athletes.

Prior to his stint at Nebraska, Busch was the assistant athletic trainer at Colorado State University from 2006-12 with the football program. He spent 2005 working for Indiana University as an intern assistant football athletic trainer and was an athletic training intern for the Minnesota Vikings.

Busch was a graduate assistant athletic trainer with the University of Minnesota football program and worked as an undergraduate at the University of Iowa with its football and men's basketball programs.

Originally, from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Busch graduated from Iowa with a bachelor's degree of science in athletic training in 2002. He graduated from Minnesota with a master's degree in sports management in 2005.

Jeremy is married to the former Peggy Manning, and the couple has twins, Emma and Landon.

**THE BUSCH FILE**

**HOMETOWN**

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

**FAMILY**

Wife: Peggy  
Son: Landon  
Daughter: Emma

**EDUCATION**

B.S., athletic training – Iowa, 2002

M.Ed., sports management – Minnesota, 2005



**Chase Louthan**  
Assistant Athletic Trainer



**Nick Eller**  
Assistant Athletic Trainer



**Emily Hahn**  
Assistant Athletic Trainer



**Zac Williams**  
Assistant Athletic Trainer

## FOOTBALL VIDEO



# JOE MAGGIO

**DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL VIDEO**

**STONY BROOK, 2012**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Joe Maggio was named the Illinois football program's Director of Video in March 2021. Maggio oversees all day-to-day video operations for the Fighting Illini, coordinates Illinois and opponent scouting video for coach and student-athlete review, handles recruiting film, and manages a team of student assistants.

Maggio joined the Illini after five seasons with the UNLV football program, where he oversaw the Rebels' video operations. He spent the 2013-15 seasons in the same capacity at Florida International where he worked with former Illinois head coach Ron Turner.

Maggio joined FIU after a long stint at his alma mater, Stony Brook, where he eventually served as video operations manager and pro liaison assistant for the Seawolves. Maggio, who received his bachelor's in business management economics from Stony Brook in 2012, also worked with the Stony Brook lacrosse program and served as a videographer for the Major League Lacrosse Long Island Lizards franchise.

## THE MAGGIO FILE

### HOMETOWN

Huntington, New York

### EDUCATION

B.A., business management  
economics – Stony Brook, 2012



**Brendan McGuire**

Assistant Director of Football Video

FOOTBALL EQUIPMENT



# JAKE ROSCH

DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL EQUIPMENT OPERATIONS

IOWA STATE, 2009

FIRST SEASON AT ILLINOIS

## THE ROSCH FILE

### HOMETOWN

Hartland, Wisconsin

### FAMILY

Wife: Megan

Daughters: Elizabeth, Margaret

### EDUCATION

B.S., criminology –Iowa State, 2009

Jake Rosch is in his first season as Illinois' Director of Football Equipment Operations. Rosch is responsible for all of Illinois' equipment needs, including fitting, ordering, maintaining, laundering and inventory. Rosch is one of the athletic department's key Nike liaisons.

Rosch's duties also extend to game-day logistics for home and away games, highlighted by postseason competition. Rosch is also responsible for maintaining the football equipment budget.

Rosch came to Illinois from Arkansas, where he was the Director of Football Equipment Operations since 2014. During his time at Arkansas, Rosch worked with five bowl teams.

During the 2014 season, Rosch helped reintroduce Arkansas' 1964 uniforms to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of Arkansas' National Championship. In 2017, Rosch helped create an Arkansas Razorback-Dallas Cowboys crossover uniform to honor Arkansas letterwinner and alum Jerry Jones' induction to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Prior to Arkansas, Rosch spent three years at Iowa State as the Assistant Director of Equipment and two years at California as the Head of Football Equipment operations, where he helped the athletic department and Nike successfully partner to produce a complete rebrand. He began his career in the equipment industry as a student manager at Iowa State. He is a certified member of the Athletic Equipment Managers Association (since 2009) and is an active member of the AEMA Certification Steering Committee.

A native of Hartland, Wisconsin, Rosch graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in criminology. He and his wife, Megan, met as undergraduate student managers at Iowa State and have two daughters, Elizabeth and Margaret.



**Kenny Pleimann**  
Assistant Equipment Manager



**Devin McKeough**  
Equipment Graduate Assistant

## NUTRITION



# TARA TRALEWSKI

**HEAD FOOTBALL NUTRITIONIST**

**NORTH CENTRAL, 2018**

**SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS**

Tara Tralewski is in her second season at Illinois and first as head football nutritionist in 2022. She served as a nutrition fellow during the 2021 season, working specifically with the Illini football program.

Tralewski oversees all of the nutrition needs for football, providing fueling, performance nutrition education, and counseling services to the student-athletes.

Previously, Tralewski was a nutrition assistant at Oklahoma in 2020, helping the Sooners to a Big 12 title and a College Football Playoff appearance.

Tralewski graduated from the North Central University with a degree in exercise science in 2017. She was a libero and defensive specialist for the North Central volleyball team.

Tralewski was raised in Naperville, Illinois. She is an active member of the Collegiate and Professional Sports Dietitians Association (CPSDA).

## THE TRALEWSKI FILE

### HOMETOWN

Naperville, Illinois

### EDUCATION

B.S., exercise science – North Central, 2018

M.S., nutrition – Illinois, 2023



**Veronica Hindle**  
Nutrition Fellow



**Lexi Martoia**  
Nutrition Fellow

FOOTBALL ACADEMICS



# MERCE POINDEXTER

ASSISTANT AD, ACADEMIC SERVICES

AKRON, 2009

SECOND SEASON AT ILLINOIS

## THE POINDEXTER FILE

### HOMETOWN

Ellwood City, Pennsylvania

### FAMILY

Wife: Shelly

Son: Zayne

### EDUCATION

B.S., business and organizational communication – Akron, 2009

M.S., sport administration – Akron, 2011

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Akron, 2005-08

Merce Poindexter joined the University of Illinois as Assistant AD/Academics in 2021. Poindexter directs the Illinois football team's academic department following five years at Tennessee as the Associate Director of Academic Services for the football and women's volleyball programs.

Prior to arriving at Tennessee, Poindexter served as a Senior Academic Advisor at Florida State from 2013-2016. He provided academic oversight to the football program during his time in Tallahassee. Poindexter began his career serving as an academic coordinator for the football program at Georgia Tech in Atlanta, Georgia.

Poindexter is an active member of the National Association of Academic and Student-Athlete Development Professionals (NAA), and served as the committee chair for the Ethnic Concerns Committee during the 2017-2018 calendar year.

Poindexter, the western Pennsylvania native, attended the University of Akron as a football student-athlete and was the offensive captain of the Zips in 2008. He earned his bachelor's degree in business and organizational communication in 2009, and his master's degree in sport administration in 2011.

Poindexter resides in Champaign with his wife, Shelly, and their son Zayne.



**Mike Maziarz**  
Assistant Director of  
Academic Services, Football



**Alyssa Czapla**  
Academic Counselor

# ATHLETICS COMMUNICATION / SOCIAL MEDIA / DESIGN

**I** Bielfeldt Athletic Administration Building  
1700 South Fourth Street // Champaign, IL 61820  
(217) 333-1391 // fightingillini.com/media



Kent Brown    Derrick Burson    Brett Moore    Libby Knight    Danny Mattie    Jessica Leifheit    Connor Tomko



Eleanor Guinan    Nick Tomanelli



David Craan    Jen Fisher    Paige Apkarian    Al Campion    Leigh McGuirk    Travis Perry

## 2022 FOOTBALL RECORD BOOK CREDITS

Executive Editor: Kent Brown

Cover Designs: Travis Perry

Photography: David Craan, Michael Glasgow, Darrell Hoemann, Cary Frye, Mark Jones, Bradley Leeb, Craig Pessman

Printing: Premier Print Group, Champaign, Illinois

KENT BROWN	Associate Athletic Director, Communication	(217) 244-6533	kwbrown3@illinois.edu
DERRICK BURSON	Assistant Athletic Director, Communication	(217) 333-0933	burson@illinois.edu
BRETT MOORE	Assistant Athletic Director, Communication (Football)	(309) 212-6367	btmoore3@illinois.edu
DANNY MATTIE	Assistant Director, Athletics Communication (Football #2)	(970) 217-3140	mattie2@illinois.edu
LIBBY KNIGHT	Assistant Director, Athletics Communication	(217) 265-8171	eknight2@illinois.edu
JESSICA LEIFHEIT	Assistant Director, Athletics Communication	(217) 333-1391	jessleif@illinois.edu
CONNOR TOMKO	Assistant Director, Athletics Communication	(217) 333-1391	ctomko@illinois.edu
ELEANOR GUINAN	Athletics Communication Coordinator	(217) 333-1391	mhaufe2@illinois.edu
NICK TOMANELLI	Athletics Communication Coordinator	(217) 333-1391	bperel@illinois.edu
JEN FISHER	Office Manager	(217) 333-1391	jdfishe1@illinois.edu
DAVID CRAAN	Football Photographer	(217) 333-1391	craan2@illinois.edu
PAIGE APKARIAN	Director of Creative Services	(217) 244-1148	paigea@illinois.edu
AL CAMPION	Assistant Director of Social Media	(217) 333-1391	campiona@illinois.edu
LEIGH MCGUIRK	Director of Social Media	(217) 333-1391	lmcguirk@illinois.edu
TRAVIS PERRY	Associate Director, Creative Services	(217) 333-1391	travisp2@illinois.edu

## BUSEY BANK ILLINI SPORTS NETWORK



Martin O'Donnell, Steve Kelly, and Brian Barnhart

The 54-station Busey Bank Illini Sports Network – plus SiriusXM satellite radio and TuneIn internet radio – brings Illinois football to fans across the state and Midwest with Brian Barnhart and Martin O'Donnell calling the action.

In 2022, Barnhart will be in his 21st season as the “Voice of the Illini” after a long stint in professional baseball, including two years as the play-by-play voice of the Anaheim Angels. Barnhart serves as the voice of the Busey Bank Fighting Illini Sports Network, providing play-by-play coverage of football and men’s basketball and as the host of the statewide coaches call-in program.

A native of nearby Tolono, Barnhart graduated from Liberty University before beginning a 15-year career in professional baseball in 1986. In 1998, Barnhart was named the play-by-play announcer for the Angels and spent two full seasons with the American League club before returning to the Champaign-Urbana area in 2000. He currently is a news and sports announcer at

WDWS-AM 1400 in Champaign, hosting the popular “Penny for your Thoughts” show weekday mornings.

During the 2007 season, Barnhart was honored by the Illinois Broadcasters Association with the “Silver Dome Award for Best Sports Play-by-Play” for his call of Illinois’ football upset of No. 1 Ohio State. In 2008, Barnhart was named “Sportscaster of the Year” in the state of Illinois by the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association.

Former Illini All-American offensive lineman Martin O'Donnell returns to the Fighting Illini Sports Network for his seventh season as an expert analyst in 2021. O'Donnell, who lettered at Illinois from 2004-07, and earned All-America honors at left guard in 2007 after helping lead the Illini to the 2008 Rose Bowl, replaced former Illini quarterback Kurt Kittner in the booth.

Along with Barnhart and O'Donnell on the broadcast again this fall is Steve Kelly, a veteran Illini sportscaster who handles pregame, halftime and postgame host duties. Kelly has covered Illini athletics for over two decades on television and radio. He hosts “Saturday Morning Sportsline” along with Loren Tate Saturday mornings on WDWS-AM 1400 in Champaign.

The statewide Busey Bank Fighting Illini Sports Network is managed by Fighting Illini Sports Properties and encompasses all sponsorship and operational elements. Illini Sports Network programming includes hour-long pregame and postgame shows around live football and men’s basketball games, plus coverage of women’s basketball, volleyball and baseball.



## 2022 FOOTBALL STATIONS (as of July 2022)

Aledo	WRMJ 102.3 FM	Mt. Carmel	WSJD 100.5 FM
Alton	WBGZ 94.3 FM	Murphysboro	WINI 93.5 FM
Alton	WBGZ 1570 AM	Murphysboro	WINI 1420 AM
Bloomington	WWHX100.7 FM	Paxton	WPXN 104.9 FM
Carthage	WCAZ 99.1 FM	Peoria	WZPN 101.1 FM
Carthage	WCAZ 1510 AM	Pittsfield	WBBA 97.5 FM
Champaign	WDWS 1400 AM	Quincy	WTAD 103.3 FM
Champaign	WDWS 93.9 FM	Quincy	WTAD 930 AM
Champaign	WHMS 97.5 FM	Robinson	WTAY 94.3 FM
Chicago	WLS 890 AM	Robinson	WTAY 1570 AM
Danville	WDAN 1490 AM	Robinson	WTYE 101.7 FM
Danville	WDNL 102.1 FM	Rockford	WROK 1440 AM
Davenport, IA	WFXN 1230 AM	Rockford	WROK 96.1 FM
Decatur	WSOY 1340 AM	Rushville	WXKQ 92.5 FM
Dwight	WJEZ 98.9 FM	Salem	WJBD 100.1 FM
Effingham	WHQQ 98.9 FM	Salem	WSIQ 92.1 FM
Fairfield	WFIW 1390 AM	Salem	WSIQ 1350 AM
Galesburg	WGIL 1400 AM	Sparta	WHCO 97.3 FM
Greenville	WPMB102.7 FM	Sparta	WHCO 1230 AM
Jacksonville	WJIL 97.1 FM	Springfield	WCVS 96.7 FM
Jacksonville	WJIL 1550 AM	Springfield	WFMB 1450 AM
Jacksonville	WJVO 102.9 FM	St. Louis, MO	KFNS 590 AM
Jerseyville	WIBM 1480 AM	Taylorville	WMKR 94.3 HD
Litchfield	WAOX 105.3 FM	Taylorville	WMKR104.1 FM
Marion	WGGH 98.5 FM	Vandalia	WPMB104.7 FM
Marion	WGGH 1150 AM	Vandalia	WPMB 1500 AM
Marshall	WMMC105.9 FM	Watseka	WGFA 94.1 FM

FOOTBALL SUPPORT STAFF



**Zach Acton**  
Assistant Director of Athletics,  
Event Management



**Zach Altfillisch**  
Associate Director,  
Video Services



**Cassie Arner**  
Senior Associate Director of  
Athletics, External



**Dr. Robert Bane**  
Team Orthopedic



**Kent Brown**  
Associate Director of Athletics,  
Athletics Communication



**Roger Denny**  
Exec. Senior Assoc. Director of  
Athletics/Chief Operating Officer



**Jason Heggemeyer**  
Associate Director of Athletics,  
Ticketing, Sales & Customer Service



**Howard Milton**  
Executive Senior Associate  
Director of Athletics, Development



**Derryl Myles**  
Assistant Director of Athletics,  
Video Services



**Luke Reiff**  
General Manager,  
Fighting Illini Sports Properties



**Ryan Squire**  
Executive Senior Associate AD/  
Chief Integrity Officer



**Brett Stillwell**  
Senior Associate AD, Capital  
Projects & Facilities



**Benjy Wilber**  
Associate Director of Athletics,  
Compliance



**Tiffany White**  
Faculty Athletic Representative



**Dr. Jerrad Zimmerman**  
Team Physician

2022-23 ATHLETIC BOARD

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Maureen Durack  
Janice Kimpel  
J. Andrew Langan

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Caitlin Clarke  
Neha Gothe  
Jon Hale  
Steven Hall - Chair  
Barry Houser  
Christopher Kempf  
Eric Larson

**Faculty Athletic  
Representatives**

Brenda Lindsey  
Tiffany White

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Leonardo Jimenez  
Katherine Tichy  
Caleb Griffin

**Ex-Officio Members**

Mike DeLorenzo  
Paul Ellinger  
Josh Whitman



# JOSH WHITMAN

DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

ILLINOIS, 2001

FIFTH YEAR AT ILLINOIS



Illinois alumnus Josh Whitman was hired as the University's 14th permanent director of athletics on February 17, 2016. Now in his seventh year, Whitman has infused the Fighting Illini program with energy, strategic direction, and a fierce drive to see the Illini succeed in the competitive arena and in the classroom.

The first six full years of Whitman's tenure saw Illinois Athletics demonstrate steady progress on virtually every front, an accomplishment made that much more challenging considering that more than two years were dramatically affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nowhere has that progress been more notable than on the basketball court, where head coach Brad Underwood, whom Whitman hired in 2017, has led a resurgence of the Fighting Illini. During the last three seasons, the men's basketball team has posted the best record in the Big Ten Conference – a conference that has been widely considered one of the most competitive in the history of college basketball during that span.

In 2019-20, the Illini accomplished one of the nation's largest turnarounds, improving by nine total wins from the previous season and finishing only one game out of first place in the Big Ten regular season standings. The team concluded the season ranked in the Associated Press Top 25 for the first time since 2006 and was poised for a deep postseason run until games were cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The basketball program's remarkable ascent was highlighted by the 2020-21 campaign, which, by many measures, was one of the most successful in Illinois history. The team set a school record for Big Ten victories and captured the Big Ten Tournament Championship en route to a No. 1 seed in the 2021 NCAA Tournament and a final AP regular season ranking of No. 2 in the country.

In 2021-22, the team won 15 Big Ten games and captured a share of the Big Ten regular-season championship, the 18th in program history and its first since 2005. For the second consecutive year, the team earned a Top 4 seed to the NCAA Tournament and won its opening round game.

On the gridiron, Whitman has helped the football team build a strong foundation for a successful future, including the hire of three-time Big Ten champion head coach Bret Bielema in December of 2020. In Bielema's first season, the Illini won their most conference games since 2007, including back-to-back road victories at No. 7 Penn State and No. 20 Minnesota.

A highlight of Whitman's tenure has been the football team's 2019 season, which saw the Illini post two of the biggest wins in program history: an upset victory over sixth-ranked Wisconsin and an incredible come-from-behind win at Michigan State. The victory over the Spartans made Illinois bowl eligible for the first time since 2014 and resulted in the Fighting Illini playing California in the Redbox Bowl.

More broadly, the entire Illinois program has remained nationally competitive under Whitman's leadership. In the Learfield Directors' Cup standings, Illinois has consistently been among the top 50 programs in the country, including a high of 36th in 2017-18. During Whitman's tenure, Illinois teams have made 67 NCAA postseason appearances, highlighted by 20 teams finishing in the top 16 nationally and six finishing in the nation's top four. In addition, four Illinois student-athletes have captured five individual national championships (wrestler Isaiah Martinez, 2016; men's gymnast Brandon Ngai, 2016; men's gymnast Alex Diab, 2018 and 2019; and, men's gymnast Ian Skirkey, 2021). In Big Ten competition, in addition to the men's basketball championship in 2022, the men's golf program has won the Big Ten crown every year of Whitman's tenure and seven consecutive titles overall, men's tennis captured the championship in 2021 and men's gymnastics earned the conference title in 2018.

Whitman's leadership was never more on display than during the COVID-19 pandemic, when care, concern and communication were staples of Illinois Athletics. The results were impressive. Illinois was the only athletic program in the Big Ten, and one of the only programs in the country, not to miss a single competition in any sport during the 2020-21 seasons due to COVID-19 disruption in its own program. Illinois conducted more than 105,000 COVID-19 tests on Fighting Illini student-athletes and staff, delivered more than 23,000 meals to student-athletes in isolation or quarantine and saw zero student-athletes suffer serious illness or COVID-19 complications. Financially, Whitman led a department-wide cost containment effort that resulted in more than \$15 million in spending reductions and a final COVID-19-related budget shortfall that was among the lowest in college athletics.

Whitman has hired 11 head coaches at Illinois, including Bielema, who had won three Big Ten titles at Wisconsin and more than 60 percent of his games in 12 years as a head football coach; Underwood, who has won more than 67 percent of his games in nine years as a Division I head coach; and women's basketball coach Shauna Green, who joins the Fighting Illini staff in 2022 after winning conference titles in five of her six seasons at Dayton. Other Whitman head coach hires include Chris Tamas for volleyball, who has taken the Illini to four NCAA tournament appearances in his first five seasons, highlighted by a trip to the national semifinals in 2018; Evan Clark with women's tennis, who has already garnered Big Ten Coach of the Year honors and



During his first year on the job, Whitman launched the Illinois Athletics Hall of Fame and celebrated the 28-person inaugural class with a black-tie Gala in Chicago in June 2017.



The Bielema family with Hope and Josh Whitman at Bret Bielema's introductory press conference Dec. 21, 2020.

whose teams have become a fixture in NCAA postseason competition; Nadalie Walsh with women's gymnastics, whose teams finished as Big Ten runner-up in consecutive seasons; Illini great Mike Poeta, who took over the wrestling program in 2021; iconic football coach Lovie Smith, who arrived in Champaign several years after leading the Chicago Bears to Super Bowl XXI; and, Nancy Fahey, who came to Illinois after having already been inducted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame. Whitman's most recent hires, Green in women's basketball, Jeana Kempe in swimming and diving, and interim coach Daniel Robeiro in men's gymnastics, all will make their Illini debuts in 2022.

Whitman has executed an aggressive facilities agenda since his hiring. A highlight was completion of the \$79.2 million, 110,000-square-foot Henry Dale and Betty Smith Football Center, which was formally dedicated in October 2019. Other projects include Demirjian Park, the new home for the Illinois soccer and track and field programs that opened in the spring of 2021; the Susan and Clint Atkins Baseball Training Center and the Rex and Alice A. Martin Softball Training Center, both opening in the summer of 2022. Also in 2021, work began to renovate and expand the Ubben Basketball Practice Facility, a \$40 million project that is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2022. In addition, Whitman has spearheaded the development of the Fighting Illini Center for Excellence in the former Illinois football offices in Memorial Stadium, which now provides a centralized hub of student-athlete support services.

To assist Illinois' nationally ranked men's and women's golf programs, Whitman orchestrated the acquisition of the former Stone Creek Golf Club as part of a \$15 million, multi-faceted gift of real estate to the University from long-time friends of Illinois Athletics, the Atkins family. The course, now rebranded the Atkins Golf Club at the University of Illinois, underwent extensive renovations using funds from a \$5 million anonymous gift to provide Illinois Golf with a championship-caliber home. The course re-opened to the public in June of 2022.

To support this facility plan and various other strategic initiatives, Whitman has teamed with DIA's Office of Athletic Development to achieve unprecedented success on the fundraising trail. Whitman's arrival synchronized perfectly with the public launch and execution of the campus-wide With Illinois fundraising campaign. As part of the With Illinois campaign, DIA secured more than \$321 million in fundraising production, easily surpassing its fundraising goal of \$300 million. The campaign featured several of the largest single gifts in program history.

Under Whitman's leadership, Illinois is in the midst of five consecutive fiscal years of recording more than \$30 million in new gift commitments (FY18 through FY22), with three consecutive years (FY18 through FY20) exceeding \$40 million. In FY20, Illinois secured more than \$45 million in new gifts, the second-highest single-year total in Illinois Athletics history.

In 2018, DIA announced a \$20 million donation from the H.D. Smith Foundation, led by brothers Dale and Chris Smith, to name the Henry Dale and Betty Smith Football Center in honor of their parents. Whitman led the effort to secure a \$7 million gift from the Demirjian family to create the new stadium and related facilities for soccer and track and field. He worked with longtime donors Susie Atkins and Rex Martin to garner separate \$3 million naming gifts for new indoor training facilities for baseball and softball, respectively. In total, DIA has received nearly 40 gifts of \$1 million or more during Whitman's tenure.

Whitman has become a strong advocate and leader in the areas of diversity and inclusion. Shortly after his arrival in 2016, Whitman reorganized the department's leadership structure and created DIA's Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, which hosted a Diversity Summit in the spring of 2018. Whitman has emphasized diversity in key DIA leadership positions, including on the executive and coaching staffs. Throughout his tenure, and especially following George Floyd's death in the summer of 2020, Whitman has asserted an even more public voice on social justice issues and has played a prominent role in helping student-athletes and staff navigate these complicated, sensitive, and important topics.

Whitman has led a variety of other initiatives as well. He initiated a year-long, comprehensive effort to develop a new DIA mission statement (Unify. Develop. Inspire. Achieve.) and has followed with two separate strategic planning efforts, the first in 2019 and the second in 2022. In 2016, Whitman announced the creation of the University's Athletics Hall of Fame, which will induct its sixth class in the fall of 2022. In the winter of 2022, following an extensive community effort, the Illinois High School Association returned its Boys State Basketball Championship series back to State Farm Center, after an absence of more than 25 years. Whitman has also been active in Springfield, where he has worked with state lawmakers on behalf of the state's NCAA Division I athletic directors and student-athletes to pass and refine several meaningful pieces of legislation, including the Student-Athlete Endorsement Rights Act, the state's name-image-likeness bill.

Whitman, a former Academic All-American at Illinois, emphasizes strong performance by Fighting Illini student-athletes in the classroom as well. In each year of his tenure, student-athletes have posted a combined GPA of above 3.12, including, in the spring of 2021, a GPA of 3.54, the highest

## ILLINOIS ATHLETIC DIRECTOR HISTORY

1892-94	Edward K. Hall
1894-95	Fred D. Dodge
1895-98	Henry H. Everett
1898-1901	Jacob K. Shell
1901-36	George A. Huff
1936-41	Wendell S. Wilson
1941-66	Douglas R. Mills
1966-67	Leslie Bryan (interim)
1967-72	E.E. (Gene) Vance
1972	Charles E. Flynn (interim)
1972-79	Cecil N. Coleman
1979	Ray Eliot (interim)
1980-88	Neale R. Stoner
1988	Ronald E. Guenther (interim)
1988	Dr. Karol A. Kahrs (interim)
1988-91	John Mackovic
1991-92	Robert Todd (interim)
1992-2011	Ronald E. Guenther
2011-15	Michael J. Thomas
2015-16	Paul Kowalczyk (interim)
2016-	Josh Whitman



*Whitman and men's basketball head coach Brand Underwood celebrate following the Illini's win over Iowa March 8, 2020, the final game of Illinois' season before the COVID-19 pandemic.*

term GPA on record. During both the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters, all 19 Fighting Illini programs posted team GPAs of 3.00 or better, a first in program history. Also in the spring of 2021, an Illinois-record 82 percent of student-athletes earned GPAs above 3.00. Teams have set records for APR scores and the GSR score of 97 in 2021 was the best in school history. In the Spring 2022 semester, 65 student-athletes earned a 4.0 term GPA. Illini student-athletes enter the 2022-23 academic year with a school-record streak of 24-consecutive semesters with a combined GPA above 3.0.

During his tenure, Whitman has become increasingly involved in Big Ten and NCAA governance. He currently co-chairs the Big Ten's Administrators' Council and serves on the Conference's Joint Group Executive Committee. In addition, he represents the Big Ten on the Rose Bowl Management Committee. At the national level, Whitman served on two iterations of NCAA working groups that studied and proposed dramatic changes to longstanding transfer policies.

At the time of his hiring in early 2016, Whitman, then 37 years old, was the youngest athletics director in the Autonomy 5. Prior to returning to Illinois, Whitman, now 44 years old, spent nearly six years as an athletics director at two universities. He came to Champaign-Urbana following almost two years as director of athletics at Washington University in St. Louis, a nationally recognized NCAA Division III program with 19 varsity sports and approximately 500 student-athletes. During Whitman's tenure, the program posted seven top-five NCAA finishes, a combined GPA of 3.35 and a graduation rate of 99 percent. Before joining Washington University, Whitman served four years as the director of athletics at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, another of the nation's leading Division III programs. Combined at those two institutions, Whitman's teams earned four national titles and 24 NCAA top-five team finishes, plus 34 conference championships.

Whitman has two Illinois degrees. He graduated with Bronze Tablet honors in 2001 while earning a bachelor's degree in finance. In 2008, he graduated summa cum laude from the Illinois College of Law before serving as a judicial law clerk for Judge Michael Kanne on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. From 2005 to 2008, he worked for DIA and former Illini athletics director Ron Guenther in various administrative capacities.

On the gridiron for the Fighting Illini, Whitman was a four-year starting tight end from 1997-2000 and two-time First Team Academic All-American. He earned Honorable Mention All-Big Ten honors his senior season. He then spent parts of four seasons as a player in the National Football League, including stints with the San Diego Chargers, Miami Dolphins, Seattle Seahawks and Buffalo Bills.

Prior to embarking on his career in athletics administration, Whitman practiced law in Washington, D.C., with Covington & Burling LLP, a firm with a preeminent sports practice that represents, among other clients, the National Football League. Whitman remains a licensed attorney and is a member of the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics. In 2019, Whitman was selected to the national board of directors for the Sports Lawyers Association.

Whitman's leadership has earned national attention, highlighted in early 2018 when Sports Business Journal named him to its prestigious Forty Under 40 list. In July 2017, Whitman was selected Central Illinois Business Magazine's Forty Under 40 Man of the Year.

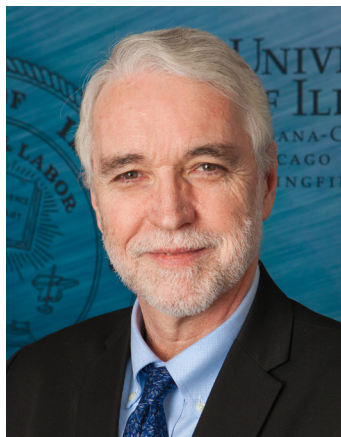
Whitman grew up in West Lafayette, Ind., and is married to Hope Whitman. They have two children: a daughter Tate, who is six, and a four-year-old son, Will. The Whitmans have become engaged in several Champaign-Urbana community organizations, including the United Way, Courage Connection, Coaches vs. Cancer, and the Tom Jones Challenger League. Whitman has been recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Champaign Rotary. He and Hope are members of the I FUND's Loyalty Circle and made a significant gift to the Smith Football Center to honor football alumni inside the facility.



*Whitman played tight end for the Fighting Illini from 1997-2000.*



*The Whitman family.*



# TIMOTHY L. KILLEEN

**PRESIDENT**  
**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS**  
**SEVENTH YEAR AT ILLINOIS**



Timothy L. Killeen is the 20th president of the University of Illinois System, with universities in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield. He took office in May 2015 and received a new contract in 2020 that extends his term through June 2024.

Since taking office, Killeen has helped lead a surge of growth across the state's flagship university system. Enrollment is at record highs, including increases among in-state and underrepresented students. Student costs have been held in check by affordability initiatives that included a tuition freeze for Illinois students in six of the last seven years and substantial increases in institutional financial aid. Retention and graduation rates top national norms, while student debt rates are lower than U.S. averages. A unique hiring initiative is adding dozens of renowned professors to the system's already world-class faculty ranks, and another seeks to add nearly 500 new tenure-system faculty. A capital program will build or upgrade nearly 350 facilities over the next decade to ensure classroom and research space matches the system's academic excellence, and the U of I System's largest fundraising campaign ever concluded in June, having far exceeded its \$3.1 billion goal.

A leading researcher in geophysics and space sciences, Killeen has also championed efforts to expand the research discovery that drives progress and job creation. That includes helping lead the creation of two pioneering new initiatives now driving innovation and workforce development – the Discovery Partners Institute, a world-class research center in downtown Chicago, and the Illinois Innovation Network, a system of satellite research hubs that are helping spread the institute's impact across the state. He also reaffirmed the system's commitment to the arts and humanities, launching a program that has pumped \$3.5 million into faculty initiatives that underscore their importance to a well-rounded education.

The ongoing growth is rooted in a Strategic Framework that Killeen helped develop in the first months of his presidency to guide the U of I System for the next decade. The roadmap set high-aspiration goals to make the system a model for higher education in the 21st Century, and build on its more than 150-year legacy of service to students, innovation and the public good.

When he joined the U of I System, Killeen brought more than three decades of experience as an educator, researcher and administrator in public higher education and in leadership positions with national scientific research agencies.

Earlier, he served as vice chancellor for research and president of the Research Foundation at the State University of New York (SUNY), one of the nation's largest higher education systems. He also served as assistant director for the geosciences at the National Science Foundation (NSF), as the Lyall Research Professor at the University of Colorado, and as director and senior scientist for the National Center for Atmospheric Research. Killeen also spent more than 20 years as a faculty member and researcher at the University of Michigan, where he also served as associate vice president for research.

He was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 2007 and is a member and past president of the American Geophysical Union and a fellow of the American Meteorological Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He has authored more than 150 publications in peer-reviewed journals, along with more than 300 other publications and papers.

A native of Wales and a U.S. citizen, Killeen received his bachelor's degree in physics and astronomy at University College London, where he also earned his doctoral degree in atomic and molecular physics and was later awarded an honorary doctorate degree.

Killeen's wife, Roberta M. Johnson, holds B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in geophysics and space physics from the University of California, Los Angeles. She has

published more than 60 peer-reviewed papers, review articles, abstracts and non-referred reports and articles in the area of upper mesosphere and lower thermosphere research, as well as on educational programs.

She was a research physicist at SRI International in Menlo Park, Calif., from 1987-1989. Thereafter, she continued her research at the University of Michigan Space Physics Research Laboratory as a research scientist from 1989-2000. While at the University of Michigan, beginning in 1995, she initiated the Windows to the Universe project, which brings multi-level scientific background content and new research results to students, educators and the public, and continues to the present day.

From 2000-2010, Johnson served as the founding director of education and outreach at the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colo., and as a scientist at the High Altitude Observatory from 2000-2011. From 2006-2015, she directed the National Earth Science Teachers Association and from 2012-2015, served as a clinical professor at the State University of New York at Albany in the Department of Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences.

Johnson has extensive experience advising NASA, the NSF and professional societies on topics in education and outreach, the uses of cyber infrastructure for education and diversity, and has served on numerous advisory boards for projects in these areas. She led an ad hoc review of science education for the International Council for Science and served as a member of the National Academy of Sciences Climate Change Education Roundtable from 2010-2012.

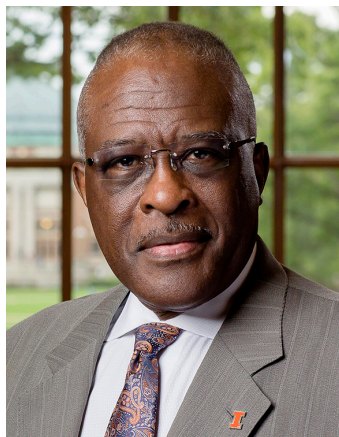
In 2016, she was recognized with the American Geophysical Union's Athelstan Spilhaus Award for her work to bring the excitement and beauty of the geosciences to the public. In 2017, she received the Jan Woerner and Harold B. Stonehouse Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Killeens have three children.



## 2022-23 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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# ROBERT J. JONES

CHANCELLOR

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

SIXTH YEAR AT ILLINOIS



Robert J. Jones became chancellor of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on September 26, 2016. He previously served as president of the University at Albany, State University of New York (SUNY) and is an experienced and accomplished scientist and research university leader.

At the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Jones serves as chancellor of the state's flagship, land-grant university. At Urbana, Jones' tenured faculty home is in the Department of Crop Sciences, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES). Jones is the first African American scholar appointed as Urbana chancellor since the office was created in 1967. He is the current Chair of the Board of Directors for the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

At Illinois, he launched a year-long celebration of the university's Sesquicentennial that honored its history while establishing a new vision of the land-grant university for the 21st century. Under his leadership that future is taking shape quickly and visibly. The university has launched a \$2.25 billion philanthropic campaign that has already exceeded the goal and includes two of the largest private gifts ever made to Illinois. He has implemented the vision of creating the Carle Illinois College of Medicine, the first engineering-based medical school in the world. The hiring of an inaugural vice chancellor for diversity, education and inclusion was a major step in fostering an even more open and collaborative community of students and faculty. And with the Illinois Commitment, a program that guarantees four years free tuition to state residents with family incomes less than \$61,000, Jones has continued to deliver on the university's founding promise of making a world-class college education affordable and accessible.

A Georgia native, Jones, earned a bachelor's degree in agronomy from Fort Valley State College, a master's degree in crop physiology from the University

of Georgia, and a doctorate in crop physiology from the University of Missouri, Columbia. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and is a fellow of the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society of America. He began his academic career as a faculty member at Minnesota in 1978 and became an internationally respected authority on plant physiology.

Throughout his distinguished, 34-year career at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus, Jones held several progressively responsible positions at the Big Ten institution. While senior vice president for system academic administration, Jones had administrative and budgetary responsibilities for the four constituent campuses in Duluth, Crookston, Morris and Rochester and the offices for public engagement, equity and diversity, Extension Service, Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Stations, information technology and human resources.

From Minnesota, Jones became the President of the University at Albany, one of SUNY system's leading research universities. During his tenure there, Jones launched that university's largest and most strategic academic expansion in 50 years, including establishment of the nation's first integrated College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity. He also created the university's first College of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

Throughout his career, Jones has worked to make education available to promising young scholars around the world. From 1984-1994, he worked with Archbishop Desmond Tutu's South African Education Program (as an academic and scientific consultant) which educated more than 3,000 black South Africans in American Universities.

Jones is married to Dr. Lynn Hassan Jones, MD, a retired muscular skeletal diagnostic radiologist. Together they have five children and five grandchildren.



