

BIG PLAY DUO

Tight ends Herdman, Hopkins can cause matchup problems for Purdue opponents. Sports, 1C



JOURNAL & COURIER

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SAM KING/JOURNAL & COURIER

Riley Lowder pulls off his helmet for a quick drink after a practice drill.

Autistic Delphi student opens up through football

Freshman receiver/defensive back Lowder is the ultimate teammate

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DELPHI - Practice ended Tuesday evening with Riley Lowder breaking down the team huddle.

The Delphi freshman receiver and defensive back is far and away the smallest player for the Oracles.

He got lost in the mass of teenagers, but all could hear his voice belt out a chant to signify the end of that day's preparation for Friday's sectional opener.

That is a huge step for Lowder, whose autism limits his social capabilities.

Because of football, Lowder is starting to overcome the shyness created by his neurological disability.

Weston Windell is Lowder's favorite player because, "he is the quarterback."

After every touchdown pass, Windell comes to the sideline and knows Lowder is going to deliver a high five or fist bump.

Lowder is the ultimate football teammate and that does not go unnoticed.

For a recent school project, Lowder was left without partners to create a video for Laurie Kinzie's interactive media class. So the teacher brainstormed ideas on what Lowder would like the focus of his video to be.

The answer was simple.

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IPFW FACULTY DECRY SLASHED PROGRAMS

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FORT WAYNE - Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne is in a state of flux after school leaders announced massive cuts across academic programs.

After five years of shrinking enrollment, the university announced Tuesday a recommendation to eliminate or restructure several programs and departments. Three departments — women's studies, philosophy and geology — would be eliminated by Jan. 1 under the plan.

The changes are expected to save \$1.1 million annually.

The move prompted an outcry from faculty members and students who say they feel betrayed and argue many of the changes won't generate enough savings to justify the cuts.

"I think the university is going to be a really angry, depressed place, to a certain extent," said Jeff Malanson, presiding officer of the Faculty Senate. "Faculty and students from across the university are really angry and upset and saddened to see this happening to IPFW."

A Change.org petition to save the women's studies department had more than 1,300 supporters as of Thursday afternoon. Another petition to stop the cuts had generated nearly 1,000 signatures.

Students and faculty also are holding a rally and "teach-in" on campus Wednesday to protest the changes.

"I personally feel so blindsided by it," said Janet Badia, director and professor of women's studies. "There's a sort of feeling of trauma."

Who's affected?

Tenured faculty in eliminated departments will move to other departments, while the future employment of continu-

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JAMIE LYNN CHEVILLET/JOURNAL & COURIER
Kristi Redmon-Felix instructs a kindergarten class at Miller Elementary in Lafayette on Jan. 20, 2010.

Lantern vigil to honor slain Lafayette art teacher

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A memorial and lantern vigil on Sunday will commemorate the life of Kristi Redmon, a 52-year-old Lafayette art teacher who was murdered last week.

The event is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Sunday at Edgelea Elementary School, 2910 S. 18th St. It is being organized by several students' parents.

The public is welcome to pay their respects and say goodbye while 100 lan-

terns are released into the air, according to a Facebook event page.

Redmon was killed Oct. 12 outside her home in the 1300 block of Ridgeway Avenue. Darius Javon Printup, 18, was arrested early Saturday and charged Wednesday in connection to the fatal shooting.

Call J&C reporter Joseph Paul at 765-420-5339, email him at jpaul@jconline.com or follow him on Twitter: @JosephPaulJC.

USA TODAY



TRUMP: I MIGHT NOT CONCEDE

Unprecedented stance calls to mind Bush v. Gore, but there's a big difference. **USA TODAY 1B**

LOWDER

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Football. "It did turn out better than I thought," Lowder said. Football players Jacob Clouser, Dylan Hart, Jaden Kinzie and Windell volunteered to help their teammate with a football video that was the best of the bunch.

They titled it, "Riley Lowder, The Man."

It's a highlights montage format that includes Lowder tackling a ball carrier, catching a touchdown pass from Windell and being carried off the field on his teammates' shoulders.

Laurie Kinzie was astonished how well the final product turned out and emailed the three-minute music video to school administrators.

"It just makes you feel like a proud dad seeing the kids take something like that on without much guidance from me," Delphi football coach Josh

Strasser said. "It is not like they came to me and said, hey, can we do this?"

Lowder has carried a consistent smile and newfound confidence ever since.

When he goes home, he talks about football.

It's exactly the impact Andrea "Missi" Lowder hoped a small town would provide for her son when the family moved from Greenfield.

"Where we came from is a bigger school and he wouldn't be able to (play sports)," she said. "My husband and I were both raised (in Greenfield) and we were a little disappointed that they were nonchalant. When he was in sixth grade, they said he probably wouldn't graduate and you need to accept that and move on."

Not only did the Lowders not accept that, they embraced it as a challenge.

She refused to enroll him in special education courses.

After Riley finished seventh grade, they moved to Delphi.



SAM KING/JOURNAL & COURIER
Delphi freshman Riley Lowder runs a pass route during practice on Tuesday.

As an eighth grader, he played basketball and ran track.

As a freshman, he wanted to join the football team.

"I like being out here because I just want to have fun with football," Riley said before Tuesday's practice.

Initially, Strasser was reserved.

He met with the family to better understand how he could help include Riley.

His ultimate goal was to break through to Riley

and get him to open up.

Riley showed up at all the summer workouts. He arrived on time every day when practices began in August during the Midwest heat wave.

He never spoke until he was 4 years old. Now in a new environment on the gridiron, Riley fell back into that shell.

"Over the summer, I didn't hear him speak. I didn't even know what his voice sounded like," Windell said. "Once the season began, we started taking him under our wing and he opened up to us."

Lowder now has no reservations breaking down the team huddle after practice. Sometimes he even sings in front of the team, showing off his choir skills.

That meant more to Delphi's football program than any of its five victories this season.

"He started being more social and that is a pretty cool feeling," Hart said. "He looked up to us older guys."

Riley looked up to them, but he quickly be-

came one of them.

During lunch, Lowder sits with his football friends.

In practice, he'll readily jump in as a scout team player. Just two months ago, he spent practices standing in the background watching.

He's not immune the physical nature of the sport, either.

Windell laughs while telling a story of Lowder getting run over by Clouser, a senior lineman who nearly triples Lowder's size.

"He took a hit from (Clouser) and he strapped his helmet, got back up and started playing again," Windell said. "He does not quit. It definitely changes your perspective of the game."

Lowder's role with the Oracles is mostly on special teams with the junior varsity team and that's more than enough to leave an irreplaceable smile on his face.

His favorite thing to do is run down the field on kickoffs.

Coaches will advise

Lowder to key on a certain player. He'll rarely acknowledge that he understands his duties, but every time performs his task exactly as it was explained to him.

"With the social inabilities that he has with his autism, being a part of a team is huge to help him take steps on those inabilities he is presented with and things he has to work really hard to overcome," Strasser said.

Among the topics covered when Strasser first talked to Andrea Lowder was that he wanted Riley to know he could be blocked and tackled, just like he was taught to block and tackle an opposing player.

Strasser feared potential injury.

Riley Lowder did not.

"I said, 'Riley, you could get hit really bad,'" Andrea told her son when he decided he wanted to play football. "He said, 'I'm OK. I'm a man now, Mom.'"

Riley Lowder is not only a man. Riley Lowder is The Man.

IPFW

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ing lecturers will be worked out on a case-by-case basis, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Carl Drummond said. Some limited-term lecturers and clerical and support staff might not come back next semester, he added.

Students with majors in the closed programs will be allowed to complete their area of study, Drummond said.

Fewer than 75 students are enrolled among the three eliminated departments and the French and German degrees that were cut, he said.

"These are historically small programs that in our current financial situation we can't afford to sustain," Drummond said, noting he had to eliminate his own home department of geology.

Although new students won't be able to major in the subjects, he said the school will continue to offer classes in those areas.

Badia said she was thrown off by the recommendation to close her department because it had been improving its student recruitment and retention.

Women's studies graduated its largest class of 10 students in spring, she said. Twenty-eight students currently are ma-



IPFW announced cuts to save \$1.1 million annually.

joring in the department and many others are receiving a minor.

A recent university review of women's studies was "glowingly positive," Badia said, and there were no signs that the department was at risk for complete closure.

"It's just heartbreaking because I feel like as a program we've been doing exactly what the university asked us to do," she said.

The department generates more than twice the amount of money from tuition fees that it costs to run, Badia said. Last year, the program ran on less than \$200,000, she said.

Drummond said the cuts weren't specifically determined by which individual departments make money for the university.

Faculty members can provide feedback on and suggest alternatives to the plan until Nov. 15, Drummond said, but any proposed changes have to

meet or exceed the reductions.

How IPFW got here

Fort Wayne has experienced a 16 percent decrease in enrollment in the past five years, from 14,326 students in 2011 to 12,010 this fall, according to enrollment data. The school's currently operating on a \$3 million deficit.

Due to shrinking enrollment, the university in 2014 began an internal review of its units led by a team of administrators and faculty members. Last spring, the team recommended several changes to make the university run more effectively, which included restructuring 13 academic departments.

In September, Drummond sent a list of programs he recommended for restructuring or elimination.

He called for the closure of a number of de-

grees and programs at that time, Malanson said, but those subjects had few students in them and faculty weren't greatly impacted.

At the same time, the Indiana General Assembly in April 2015 mandated that Indiana University and Purdue work with the Legislative Services Agency to study potential options for IPFW's future. Last January, lawmakers recommended the two institutions split control of the campus, which would give IU control of three health sciences programs — all of which perform well — and Purdue the rest of the academic programs.

Purdue and IU are currently working out an agreement to decide who will control which programs.

IPFW leaders met with the Purdue Board of Trustees, which oversees the campus' finances, on Oct. 13 to discuss the management agreement and the school's review of academic programs.

After that meeting, faculty members said Drummond told them the cuts would be much more significant than originally planned. On Tuesday, he released a list of degree programs, majors and departments that would be suspended, restructured or eliminated.

Drummond said the Board of Trustees meet-

ing was private, so he couldn't disclose what specifically was discussed. He said all of the program recommendations were made by IPFW leaders.

"It is fair to say that the trustees have a great deal of concern about the academic cost and organizational structure," he said.

In an email statement, Purdue President Mitch Daniels reiterated that the recommendations came from Fort Wayne administrators and faculty.

"Purdue wants its regional campuses to operate with autonomy, which of course implies a responsibility to deal effectively with problems such as these," he said. "We appreciate the efforts of those who drew up the ... recommendations, but as they say, any plan is only as good as its implementation."

Contact J&C higher education reporter Meghan Holden at mholden@jconline.com. Follow her on Twitter: @MeghanHolden.

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