

Smedley's sister addresses brother's death

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Vivianne Brown, sister of Joseph Smedley, said she does not believe the death of her brother was a suicide by drowning as was recently

confirmed by the Monroe County Coroner.

Brown and husband Deonte shared several thoughts on Smedley's case Tuesday night during "The Critical Conversation: Joseph Smedley and the Aftermath," a

student-organized discussion allowing students to share thoughts on the racial climate at IU and on Smedley's death.

"Now that they have ruled it a suicide, I believe that it's time for you to know some facts so that

you're able to put together your own conclusions," Brown said.

Brown said after reading the coroner's report, which was not released to the public, she learned Smedley was found in Lake Griffy with his shoes, socks and backpack

still on.

At the talk, Brown said the backpack was found strapped to his chest with somewhere between 62 to 66 pounds of rocks. However,

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Antonio Allen became the hope of his district as the star of the Ben Davis High School football team after growing up in one of the most impoverished areas of Indianapolis but has since been charged with possession of drugs.

PHOTO COURTESY OF 247SPORTS

Former IU safety's identity lies somewhere in between perceived extremes

By Brody Miller
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Antonio Allen, wrapped in disgrace, stood in court.

"You, Mr. Allen, are charged with dealing narcotic drugs," the judge said. "Do you understand that charge?"

"Yes, ma'am," he said softly.

"And the possible penalties?"

"Mm-hm."

She went through his other charges. The former IU safety pleaded not guilty to each — dealing in methamphetamine, narcotics, cocaine — and made his way out of the Monroe County courthouse, where the news cameras were waiting.

Allen buried his head in the shoulder of a grey-dreadlocked man. Allen's own dreadlocks hung forward across his shoulders as he exited his initial hearing.

A reporter asked Allen if he had any comment.

"God is good," he said, his eyes locked on the ground.

Six months later, people tend to see only one of two sides to Antonio Allen. They rarely see any in between.

One can see both sides by watching interviews of Allen, the former IU football player who was arrested in his cream and crimson athletic shorts and shirt while exiting practice in June.

First, focus on Allen's face while he listens to a reporter ask a question. One sees the stern, hardened eyes and tightly closed mouth of a 205-pound safety that once knocked an opposing running back out cold. This is the face you see in his mug

shot, too.

This is the face most of the public thinks of.

Then watch the sharp transition when it's his turn to speak. He flashes the vibrant three-quarter smile Ben Davis High School Coach Mike Kirschner says lights up any room he enters. Allen has golden teeth, which he said he copied off his father as he answers questions warmly and dots his answers with "sir."

This is the face most who have ever met Allen think of — the hard-working sweetheart who is now taking classes at Indiana State.

This is the dilemma when trying to figure out the prized prospect who has fallen so hard from grace.

Is he the quiet, guarded guy from a rough neighborhood in Indianapolis who keeps to himself or the man whom former IU teammate Tim Bennett called the funniest player

on the team? Is he the star player whose peers assure had no ego and claim was "too real" for dealing, or the apparent drug dealer with a Colt .45 handgun found in his back bedroom?

The answer, as is the case with most human beings, is somewhere in between the extremes.

Ben Davis High School in Indianapolis is home to both suburban, upper middle class students and those from poverty. Coach Kirschner likes to call it "the melting pot of society."

Maybe the most dangerous of those neighborhoods is Haughville, which Allen calls home. Indianapolis crime rates have had Haughville

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Catholic Charities resettles refugees

From IDS reports

Three weeks after a family of Syrian refugees was rerouted away from Indiana, Catholic Charities in Indianapolis has resettled another Syrian family in Indiana.

Last week, Gov. Mike Pence met privately with the archbishop of Indianapolis to request the Catholic Church not defy his directive to block Syrian refugees from settling in Indiana.

Archbishop Joseph Tobin told the governor he'd consider the request but eventually decided to bring the family into the state.

The family boarded a plane in Jordan on Sunday evening and arrived in Indianapolis on Monday.

The resettlement went against Pence's decision to block additional Syrian refugees from coming to Indiana. Citing terrorist concerns after last month's terrorist attacks in Paris, Pence joined more than half the country's governors in refusing Syrian refugees.

Almost immediately, Pence's authority to do so was challenged.

The Refugee Act of 1980, which reformed the way refugees are brought to the U.S., grants no specific authority to state governments.

The Obama administration called refugee resettlement a federal issue.

Calling his decision an "un-constitutional bluff," the American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit on behalf of an Indianapolis-based refugee agency.

Pence's spokesman told the Associated Press the governor's directive would continue to stand.

"The governor holds Catholic Charities in the highest regard but respectfully disagrees with their decision to place a Syrian refugee family in Indiana at this time," spokesman Matt Lloyd said.

The family joins about 30 Syrian refugees already settled in Indiana and about 2,000 throughout the country.

Alden Woods

IU Soul Revue performs holiday concert for donations

By Brooke McAfee
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The audience clapped and sang along during IU Soul Revue's "Soulful Holiday Concert" on Tuesday as a group of singers and instrumentalists performed holiday music. The seats were filled in the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center Grand Hall. A group of audience members without seats danced in the back.

"This is about participating," IU Soul Revue Director Tyron Cooper said as the performance began. "This is a community."

Cooper, a three-time Emmy award-winning musician and an assistant professor in the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies, introduced the musicians throughout the concert.

The event was co-sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Multicultural Affairs and the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center. The ensemble is part of the African American Arts Institute.

The IU Soul Revue, which was founded in 1971, performs genres such as rhythm and blues, soul, funk and contemporary music.

The concert features music recorded and popularized by African-American artists, Cooper said.

Students also recited poems about the holiday season between songs.

The concert not only highlights the students' artistic ability, Cooper said, but also gives the audience the chance to see the students individually. The small venue makes this possible, he said.

"The audience will have the opportunity to get to know the musicians on a more intimate level," Cooper said.

The students in IU Soul Revue are diverse in age, social background and cultural background, but the music brings them together, Cooper said.

The motto of the group is "one band, one sound," Cooper said during the performance.

Cooper said the students are intellectual artists because they are conscious of why they sing and dance and they understand the meanings behind the music.

Admission to the event cost one canned good. The donations are given to Backstreet Missions, a non-profit organization located

in Bloomington that serves the homeless.

IU Soul Revue is excited to give back to the community and they view music as a vehicle for social change, Cooper said.

"The students are thinking beyond themselves and thinking of others," Cooper said.

The holiday season brings out different aspects of the black popular music tradition and the music touches upon themes of love, family and relationships, Cooper said.

Second-year law student Marcus Phelps said "Soulful Holiday Concert" was his second time seeing the IU Soul Revue. He first saw them at the African American Arts Institute's "Potpourri of the Arts" in November.

"They are extremely talented," Phelps said. "They are like a party. I'm looking forward to having fun and having a break from finals."

Junior Unity Williams said she had also seen the group before at "Potpourri of the Arts."

Williams said she has friends in the IU Soul Revue and she highly recommends any performance by ensembles in the African American Arts Institute.

These students work so hard on



KATELYN ROWE | IDS
Singers clap and dance to the beat as they perform during IU Soul Revue's "Soulful Holiday Concert" on Tuesday in the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center Grand Hall on Tuesday.

their performance, she said.

Williams said the style of their performance is one of the aspects she likes about the group, and she was excited to see soul

incorporated into Christmas music.

"It feels like a really high-class performance at a low cost," Williams said. "They bring high energy."



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» ALLEN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ranked near the top for decades. Allen grew up in an environment of murder and drugs.

Ellis Johnston, 18, played football with Allen at Ben Davis and spent much of his senior year in Haughville.

Johnston lived two houses down from a woman, who was strangled to death and burned last year. He was surrounded by crack addicts, he said. A bootleg house was located right behind his place. He didn't have a working light on his side of a duplex so he had to run a wire from the neighbor's place.

"Everybody else around us was packing," he said.

Yet Allen always seemed to rise above the preconceived notions of the possibilities for a kid from Haughville. Leah Johnson, an IU student and former IDS editor who graduated from Ben Davis, said he was someone everyone knew because of his talent, which transcended any of Haughville's limitations.

He was courted by a long list of college recruiters and decided to commit to Ole Miss, an SEC program, during his junior year.

"This kid was the hope of our district," Johnson said. "The hope of his neighborhood and his family and our community."

This wasn't simply another talented kid at Ben Davis. Allen was someone whom Johnson described as an "inherently good" person. People lit up on the school bus when he entered. Kirschner said he remembers teachers talking about how much they liked him and enjoyed his personality in class well before he became a star player.

Some referred to Allen as a hero to people of the district. When he decommitted from Ole Miss in July 2012 and instead decided to play at IU — the struggling in-state program — just 10 days later, it only reinforced his hero status in his home neighborhood.

They couldn't help but see the future for him.

"He's really gonna do something with his life," Johnson said she remembers

thinking. "He has a chance that none of us are gonna ever have because he was so, so talented."

* * *

There was a tree in front of Allen's childhood home. Allen's father used to make him tackle it until he knocked the bark off the tree. He couldn't go to his little league game until the bark was knocked off, even if the game was well into the second quarter.

"A tree can't move," Allen said in a 2012 interview. "Now I'm hitting these boys and they're moving farther back."

Allen hit so hard he wasn't allowed to tackle in practice.

He wasn't afraid to point out his own flaws on the field.

He admitted in an interview at IU in 2015 that he was confused sometimes in a show of an uncommon sense of humility.

Allen was part of the 2013 IU recruiting class that was considered to be one of the most talented in program history. The objective was to turn around a disastrous program with star in-state players.

"If we start winning games in a couple of years and get it going," he told the Bloomington Herald-Times after his commitment, "People are going to look back at this and say, 'Yeah, Antonio Allen was on that team.'"

* * *

A confidential informant entered Allen's 19th Street apartment across from Memorial Stadium with \$620 in cash from the Indiana State Police and a video recording device, according to records. He came out with two bags: one with 6.5 grams of heroin, the other with 2.2 grams of meth.

Allen was seen in the video counting the money, weighing the narcotics and handing them to the informant. A poster of him hung on the wall.

After the second controlled purchase of \$770 worth of methamphetamine, ISP had what they needed to search Allen's apartment.

They found half-smoked blunts in the cabinet, a scale covered with white powder, a

Colt .45 handgun and a plastic Tide container with 47 grams of cocaine, 13 grams of heroin and \$920 inside.

"This is a high-profile case because who he is and where his future was," ISP Sgt. Curt Durnil said the day after the arrest. "Now it seems that future is pretty much in jeopardy."

Fans have tried to reconcile the gap between the football star beloved by his community and the man arrested for drug possession. The answer might lie with Allen's father, Antonio Lee Allen I.

"All I know is he deals in real estate," Kirschner said about Allen's father.

Others call him one of the most prominent drug dealers in Indianapolis.

He pleaded guilty to criminal confinement and domestic battery in 2004. Charges of firearm possession by a violent felon and marijuana possession were dismissed. He spent 142 days in jail and violated his probation four months later.

In 2011, the father pleaded guilty to resisting law enforcement.

One anonymous source said anybody who is involved in the illegal drug business knows Allen's father. But Kirschner said he found it important to say he was nothing but respectful when he sat in Kirschner's office. He said Allen moved around a lot but lives with his mother, as his parents are not together.

Bonner said he remembers seeing Allen's whole family come down for his first IU football game.

"His dad was just, like, so excited, cheesing and all that stuff," he said. "You could just tell his dad was very proud and happy to have his son playing for IU."

The grey-dreadlocked man Allen hid behind in the courthouse was his father.

* * *

Kirschner's office is covered wall-to-wall with memorabilia, mostly of his former players.

There are plaques and pictures of people who have gone on to play college ball or even make the NFL. There are far



IDS FILE PHOTO
Then-sophomore Antonio Allen makes a tackle during IU's game against Purdue on Nov. 29, 2014, at Memorial Stadium.

fewer reminders of his three sectional titles or his 2014 state championship.

Kirschner is a strong-jawed man with a tight white goatee and a cleanly shaven head who still looks like he could hold his own in an Oklahoma drill if he got the rush. Everything about him says football coach.

Antonio Allen is still on the wall, along with Asmar Bilal, who plays at Notre Dame; Isaiah Lewis, who plays at Michigan State; and Tandon Doss, who won a Super Bowl with the Baltimore Ravens.

"As disappointed as we are, the relationship hasn't changed," Kirschner said.

Kirschner has the statistics ready about Ben Davis as if he has to recite them quite often. There's the \$35,000 average income for a family of four, the fact 80 percent of students are on free and reduced lunch programs and the 63 different languages spoken at Ben Davis.

Coaching at a school like Ben Davis is hardly just about football. Kirschner and his staff buy groceries for players. He has a jar of money in his office so players can come get change after workouts to buy a drink or a power bar. Players, raiding his fridge for food, are often at his house.

The coach, however, admits he's tired.

"Me and my wife decided many years ago this was maybe God's way of telling us this is our mission."

But the relationship between Kirschner and Allen was still close. Allen was often over in high school for dinner with Kirschner's family. Allen's little brother, Rondell, started as a sophomore safety for the Ben Davis Giants this season, much like Allen once did.

Antonio Allen tried to make it to every game he could to support his brother.

"If he can get here, he's getting here," Kirschner said.

Kirschner said he still loves Allen unconditionally. He said he doesn't condone anything Allen did, and he's had meetings with Allen about the situation and has made it clear he is disappointed.

* * *

The failure of the hope of Haughville upsets those who knew Allen or even knew of him. Nobody justifies his actions, but very few are angry with him. Rather, they're frustrated with the world that dealt Allen the wrong hand from the outset.

It's almost as if people want to wait and hope this is all a dream.

"I don't want to go look at it through the media's eyes and view him off that because I know him as a person," Bennett said. "I know he is a good person."

"It didn't have to go down like this," Johnson said. "It didn't have to end this way."

"We don't know what his

reasoning was for doing what he did," Johnston said. "We don't know. He could have been sending the money back home ... he's very family-oriented."

Allen's Instagram account is an avenue into his life since the arrest. He can be seen dancing in his Trent Richardson Indianapolis Colts jersey or posing for pictures with either of his parents.

Now Allen is at Indiana State and is sitting out the season due to transfer rules and awaiting his trial. His original December trial was cancelled and a new one has yet to be scheduled.

Kirschner just said he hopes he appreciates his opportunities, much like he said he appreciated all the trips to Kirschner's fridge for food.

"If you do something very stupid again, I made it very clear," Kirschner said he told Allen. "Don't come back. I can't do it twice. I can't go through it twice."

The Instagram account can explain how Allen sees his future. It is positive. It is hopeful.

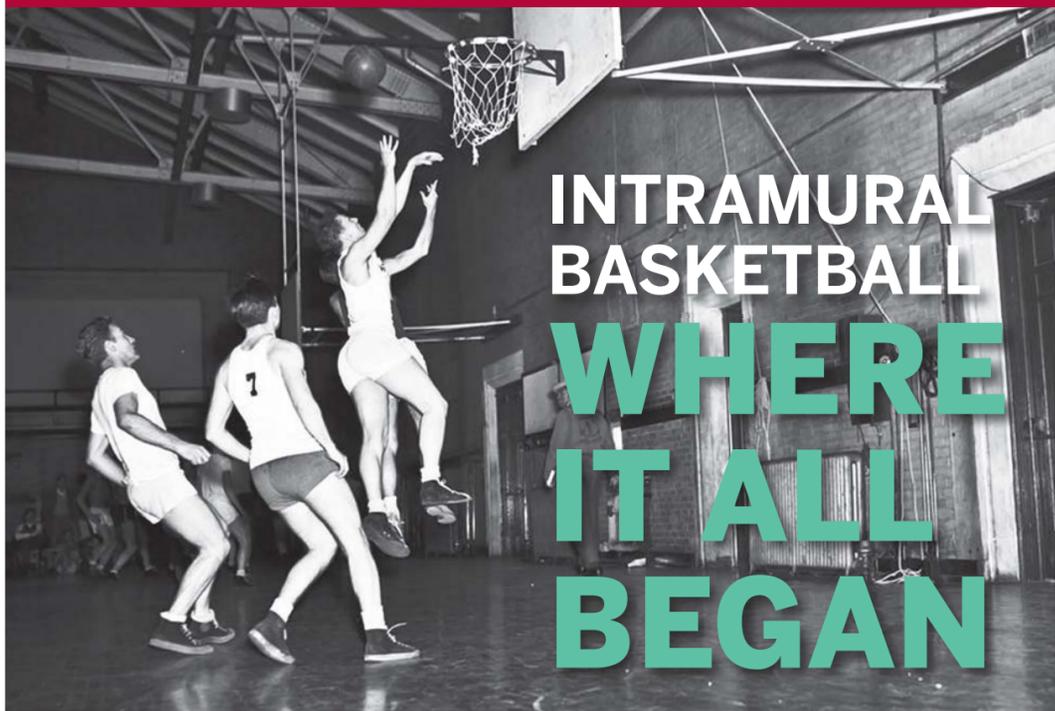
In one post, he posed in front of a silver Cadillac SUV in a Jewel Brand t-shirt with the caption, "The shirt tell it at all."

"Minor setback," the shirt read, "major comeback"



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