

President Anderson, Director Mitchell have failed IIT's scholarship athletes

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In the middle of June last year the university's Athletic Director,ENZLEY MITCHELL, finally announced that the school's athletics program would be making the transition from the NAIA into the NCAA D3.

The news came as no great surprise to anyone connected with the department given it had long been suspected that this had been President John Anderson's intention since he first appointed Mitchell in 2010.

Whether you agree with the association move or not (there are several valid reasons for and against making the change) one thing that in my view is undeniable is the deplorable way in which the university has went about maneuvering the department in preparation for the change.

As an alumni of the Men's Soccer team and the ex-Sports Editor of TechNews (I graduated in 2011), I find myself in a unique position to speak out about the way in which the department has acted since Mitchell took control.

During my final year and a half at the university I witnessed firsthand how the department treated their athletes under his leadership, a style that can best be described as that of a dictator.

I am now also fortunate enough to be free of the prospect of facing reprisals for speaking out against the way in which the Athletic Director has run the program since he took over.

This was a very real concern when I was at the school and is a continuing problem for many athletes who are still at IIT, who feel

the same way that I do about a number of issues.

For me, there are two major issues that stand out as being head and shoulders above the rest.

The first of these is that the department has effectively thrown its scholarship athletes under a bus since Mitchell took control. Athletes who had been promised by the previous Athletic Director, Lee Hitchen, that they would receive full scholarships during their collegiate career at the school have seen this guarantee vanish.

This has led to several student athletes who were over half way through their degrees at IIT being forced to fork out thousands of dollars to pay ever rising tuition fees that they never thought they would have to pay when they started at IIT.

This is most galling for the department's international athletes (a number which will continue to drop now that the school is planning to make the transition into the NCAA D3) who can't take out loans to cover tuition costs due to the fact that they are not American citizens.

The second major issue that I, and many others, have with the way in which the move has been handled by Mitchell is his attempt to cover it up for as long as possible.

It is almost certain that the school had been planning to make the association change since 2010, but when I found out about the possible move, from President Anderson that same year, Mitchell told me bluntly that he did not want me to inform students about the potential move.

Needless to say, I completely ignored the email he sent me and published the

article in TechNews anyway as I believed students had the right to know what the athletics department was planning to do.

The only reason I can think for why he didn't want the news to get out is because he believed (rightly) that it would have a negative effect on recruitment that year and that the department would lose athletes.

Both of these things happened due to the fact that everyone was aware that the standard of varsity sports would drop considerably at the university with the loss of scholarship money, something which has happened across the board in every varsity sport since Mitchell took control.

This is a clear example of Mitchell not looking out for the best interests of the athletes within his department, which I believe should be the first priority for any Athletics Director. The previous man in charge of the department, Lee Hitchen, was by no means the perfect Athletics Director, but every athlete in the department knew that they could speak to him about any issues at any time and that he would do everything he could to help them out.

You simply don't get this from Mitchell.

However, he is not the only person to blame during this transitional process. President Anderson is also at fault for the fissures that have opened up within the department.

Mitchell's leadership style has led to a significant turn over in coaches and has left countless athletes furious at the way in which they have been treated, but a lack of funding from the university is also to blame for many of the problems.

The need to improve facilities to make the move into the NCAA is one reason why the transition might be a good thing for IIT, but the university has attempted to partially fund these upgrades by, as I discussed above, withdrawing the continued scholarship increases for athletes that they need to cover their tuition fees.

President Anderson is as much to blame for this as the Athletic Director and I strongly believe questions should be asked of the decisions both men have made since they began maneuvering IIT towards the NCAA D3 in 2010.

Their actions have made a mockery of a once competitive department that has seen a steady decline in athletic standard since Mitchell took control. They have also betrayed scholarship students who have been forced to fork out thousands of dollars just to remain at the school.

All of this has been done so the department can attempt to raise funds that the university should already be making available for much needed facility repairs and upgrades.

The winners in the long run will be the university and the future students who will benefit from the improved facilities. The losers have been the most talented athletes within the department who have seen the standards of their teams crumble and it become a financial struggle just to remain in school.

Serious questions should be asked about how this situation has been allowed to develop under the leadership of President Anderson and his Athletic Director,ENZLEY MITCHELL.

Invitation to respond to 'Anderson, Mitchell's failure'

Ciaran Kohli-Lynch
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When ex-Sports Editor of TechNews, Graeme Port, asked me if he could write an article this week detailing the failures made by IIT's Athletics Department over the last couple of years, I was delighted.

Perhaps this is in part due to the fact that I have been a varsity athlete at this college for the last four years, and share many of

Graeme's grievances regarding decisions made by both President John Anderson and Athletic Director (and basketball head coach)ENZLEY MITCHELL.

Above all else, the manner in whichENZLEY MITCHELLhas dealt with student athlete scholarships at the university has been disrespectful, underhanded, and extremely costly for a number of students.

Like many student athletes, the first notice I was given of the fact that my scholar-

ship would not be raised with tuition increases was when I looked at my Fall 2011 bill. Even when one disregards the fraudulent nature of Mitchell's decision on this matter, it is simply incredible that he did not have the decency to inform athletes of such developments.

I would like to offer both President Anderson and Athletic Director Mitchell the opportunity to explain themselves in the next edition of TechNews.

Particularly, I feel like they are re-

sponsible for explaining two major issues between them.

Firstly, why was so little information given to athletes regarding the decision to effectively cut scholarships?

Also, why was the decision to transition from NAIA to NCAA Division 3 made so privately, without reasonable consultation from a wide range of people both within and outwith the Athletics Department?

President, Provost forum (continued from Page 1)

said that these decisions were not made in a vacuum, and that student input was always welcome. He stressed that any students with concerns about the budget should make those known to him in the fall, when IIT's yearly budget was drafted. SGA President Kelly Lohr also used this question to talk about the possibility of SGA making a school budget advisory committee, and that anyone interested in doing this should talk to her.

The next question posed asked why the university was adding new sports teams when existing sports teams needed more resources. Anderson took the floor to explain that new sports teams were added in order to meet the minimum requirements to be a part of the NCAA Division Three. He said that the university had to have one men's team and one women's team every fall, winter, and spring in order to join the NCAA. The President also expressed his belief that having fewer teams did not guarantee that teams would do better, and

that it was all about the teams having good recruiting, coaching, and mentoring. This question also had a follow-up question regarding the recruiting of coaches for the new teams, to which Anderson responded that a lot of work was being done to hire new coaches. Anderson said that the school just hired a new women's basketball coach, and was extremely close to hiring a women's lacrosse coach.

The penultimate question regarded the Fueling Innovation campaign and the tuition increase. The question asked why tuition was being increased if the university just raised \$132 million as part of the campaign. The President answered this question, explained that of this \$132 million, very little was accessible at this time. He said that \$53 million of the money was in the form of estates, and that the university would not be getting it until the donor passed away. He also said that \$79 million of the donations had immediately been placed in IIT's endowment, which gar-

ners interest that can be used by the university. The President wrapped up his response by explaining that this money had been donated by alumni to elevate the university, not to keep it running, and that tuition is what is used to keep a university running.

The final question of the forum spoke of the university's current trend of increasing student enrollment and tuition, and decreasing aid, and claimed that this was contrary to the university's founding principles. The question asked why the university was turning away from these principles. The President immediately questioned this question, saying that tuition was charged when the university was established, and asserting that IIT is closer to its founding principles than most universities. Provost Cramb then took to the floor to say that IIT was founded to support the city of Chicago, and explained the large number of scholarships available to Chicago children and underprivileged residents of Chicago. Cramb also explained that the amount of aid given out as a whole does not stay constant. The amount of aid that is to be given out increases as the number of

students does. The President concluded this question by having Mike Gosz take the floor, who explained that the university continues to increase the aid given to its students by not decreasing scholarships unless a student drops below a 2.0 grade point average, which it had used to. Gosz explained that IIT used to reduce a student's scholarships depending on their grades; a student could get a 3.5 GPA and still lose some scholarship funds. This practice is still followed by many universities.

With that question answered, the President and Provost Forum for the Spring 2013 semester came to a close. Whether or not the President and Provost sufficiently answered the many questions of the student body regarding tuition increases and more is yet to be seen, but it was very clear from the forum that the President and Provost stand ready to defend some of the controversial moves the university has recently made.

Still think there's unanswered questions? Don't fret, next week, SGA and TechNews will be collaborating to publish the first installment of follow-up questions that were submitted online, after the forum.