

'Heavy hitter' Gipson signs with McKendree

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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It was a proud moment for Alton senior linebacker Ricco Gipson and his family as he signed a letter of intent to play football at McKendree University on Tuesday at Alton High School.

Jeff Alderman, the Alton High School athletic director and head football coach this past season, said it was a time of celebration to recognize an athlete who did the hard work it takes to go to the next level.

“It is very important Alton High is represented at the next level,” he said. “I can’t say enough about Ricco. He was a driving force in the Southwestern Conference and the entire St. Louis area at linebacker. We will miss him tremendously. I am excited about him going to McKendree.”

Gipson recorded 105 tackles (83 solo tackles and 22 assists) on the season, one of the tops in the St. Louis area.

Gipson will join Alton safety Josh Lovings on the McKendree team next fall.

Alderman described Gipson as one of the “heaviest hitters” he had ever coached.

“Ricco will do big things at McKendree,” Alderman said. He plugged gaps stronger than anybody. He was the best in our league (Southwestern Conference). He will be close to his family and people of Alton can follow him.”

Gipson sees attending McKendree as a great opportunity to be on a team going upward.

“They (McKendree) are getting better every year,” Gipson said. “It will also be great to be close to home.”

Alderman said Gipson has left a legacy for other younger players to follow.

“He was very physical and a great tackler,” Alderman said. “We will miss his off-season work ethic.”

The Alton linebacker said most of he will miss the fans and playing in front of the home Redbirds’ crowd.

“It has been my dream to play at the next level,” Gipson said.