



# **“Moved And Honored”: Roxana Shells Give Jerseys To Inspiring Teachers, Faculty, Staff**

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter  
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ROXANA - The Roxana High School Shells football team is coached by Wade DeVries - but even off the football field, they've been coached, supported, and inspired by teachers, faculty, and staff members over the years. Players recently gave their jerseys to teachers, faculty, and staff members who made a positive impact on them during their journey to what's been a remarkable season so far.

The Shells have been undefeated on the field so far this season. In addition to being named [conference champions](#), the Shells play in the state semifinals this Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 with a chance to play for a state championship. Jersey recipients were asked to wear their jerseys at Friday's pep rally and at the semifinal playoff game on Saturday.

Roxana High School Senior Keylon Caruthers gave his jersey to Sandy Witt, who was his sixth grade teacher at Roxana Junior High School. Witt said she was “moved and honored” to be recognized for her impact on him.

“I was very touched,” Witt said. “He chose me and I was very moved and honored - it made my month!”

She said Caruthers suffered a leg injury and underwent surgery in seventh grade which briefly raised question marks around his ability to play the same way again, and that he attended Alton schools for a while. She added she was “ecstatic” once he returned to Roxana and has since bounced back from his injury.

“He's come back and he's worked hard,” she said. “He is a great person and a great player and a great student.”

In fact, she said Caruthers cared equally about school and sports, achieving a balance and always remaining “coachable.”

“He’s a great kid. He’s very responsible and cares about his academics as well as his athletics. He’s always given 110%,” Witt said. “He’s got the talent and he’s coachable, so he’s willing to listen and take advice and be the best that he can be.”

Assistant Principal Adam Miller said the gesture was a “fantastic experience for our players” that was also “meaningful for our staff.” He added that due to the high number of impactful staff members at Roxana schools, these were not easy decisions for the players to make.

“These were difficult choices for all of our players as so many teachers and staff have had a positive impact on our players and have made a difference in their life,” Miller said. “It is our hope that this demonstrates in some way our appreciation to our staff and the entire community for the support our team has been shown this year.”

Miller also wanted to give special thanks to Strength & Conditioning Coach Quinn Hellmann and Kristin Schrewe, the school’s media specialist, who took many photos.

Coach DeVries said players traveled around the school district handing their jerseys out during an Advisory Period held the last hour of the school day on Wednesday. He described it as a “really nice day” and said they definitely plan on continuing this jersey-giving recognition in the future.

“You’re able to make it about more than just football,” DeVries said. “In reality, football is part of it - football is what we do at practice - but it’s more about the experience and relationships they were able to build along the way.”



