

## IU's Harry Gonso

# From touchdown to trustee <sup>10-9-70</sup>

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Former All-American football player Harry Gonso hasn't held a football in two or three years.

The man who led Indiana University to the Rose Bowl in 1968 has been devoting himself to other activities since then, including his recent election to the IU Board of Trustees.

Despite the fact that he was graduated from the School of Business with a major in accounting in 1970 and received his J.D. degree with honors from the School of Law-Bloomington in 1973, Gonso's football player image lingers. He thinks it's unfortunate that people put so much emphasis on athletics.

To Gonso, playing football was just an extracurricular activity, like playing in the band or writing for the school newspaper. He thinks all sports are beautiful. But many people viewed him first as a player, then as a student. Athletics should be kept in perspective, he said.

Not that Gonso isn't grateful for the benefits he received from football. Coming from a large family, he couldn't have continued to law school without his athletic scholarship, he said. He also developed self-discipline and skills of interpersonal relationships, and learned a lot about himself.

Today, the former athlete-scholar is an attorney (with Bingham Summers Welse & Spilman in Indianapolis), a husband (to the former Jonni Lauritzen, a doctoral candidate in clinical psychology), and a new father. He watched the birth of his son Christopher Lee



**HARRY GONSO**  
Wants to serve

last month — "a beautiful experience."

Gonso hasn't lost touch with IU. He served on the University Athletics Committee, he recruits on campus for his law firm, he is class agent for the law school fund drive, and he attends many social and sports events in Bloomington. He even went to Philadelphia for the NCAA championship basketball game.

Weighing only about five pounds more than when he played football, Gonso dresses casually enough in his off-hours to still resemble a student. He keeps active with tennis, racquetball, and bicycling. At 28, he is the youngest non-student IU trustee since 1859.

Whether his youth will be an advantage or disadvantage in relating with students is up to the students, Gonso said. He said his own student experience still is fresh in his mind.

Gonso views the role of trustee as a fiduciary, responsible to those he affects. A trustee represents faculty, students, staff, alumni, citizens, taxpayers, and the academic

world, he said. The responsibility can't be limited just to the people of Indiana, Gonso said, "because we reach a long, long way. We're just centered here.

"I'm sure there's not going to be very many easy decisions," Gonso said about his trustee job. "I'm embarking on the three years with an open mind. I just want to serve in the best way I can."

Gonso wants to visit the various IU campuses to meet with students and discuss their concerns. He believes students today are more interested in education, employment, the economy, and becoming prepared for life.

The whole campus environment has changed since his days as an undergraduate, when students were worried about a war and the civil rights movement, Gonso said. Many positive things came out of the student unrest, he added.

Gonso views the fifth-place finish of campus maverick Leon Varjian in the nine-candidate trustee race as a protest vote.

He believes those alumni were expressing a general dissatisfaction with the way IU affairs are being handled, and he wants to find out what their specific complaints are.

Although the work as trustee will be demanding and time-consuming, Gonso expects it will be rewarding to help continue improving "the university's excellence." His particular areas of interest are the Indianapolis and regional campuses, and the search for a new dean of the law school.

Harry Gonso still holds six IU offensive football records, and remains the only sophomore ever selected Most Valuable Player. He was described in those days as "imaginative," "candid," "brassy," and "a leader."

Far from being the stereotype athlete, Gonso has proven he knows there is more to the world than a football field. He would just as soon have his new son play the clarinet as play football, he said, adding, "He doesn't have to be a little Harry."