Brian Kelly brought some reinforcements with him when he stopped by Don Bosco Prep in Ramsey, N.J., earlier this week.

The Notre Dame head coach was joined by Irish defensive coordinator Bob Diaco and cornerbacks coach Kerry Cooks as the trio was at one of the nation's elite programs to check on **Elijah Shumate** and **Yuri Wright** in advance of the 2012 defensive back recruits' official visits to South Bend this weekend.

"Basically we were just getting to know one another," Shumate's father Maurice Williams said. "We touched on football a little bit. They want to play him at safety and possibly some kick return, punt return type of stuff."

But Williams isn't as worried about his 6-foot-1, 205-pound son's ability to play football as he is in making sure Shumate will be receiving the proper support in college.

"They asked if I had any concerns or questions," Williams said. "All of my questions were based on the academic side. What type of academic support will he be getting? How is the time managed for the freshmen coming in? Are they on a schedule? If a kid is struggling, what kind of help would you give him? That kind of thing."

Williams said all of his questions were answered to his satisfaction.

“Definitely,” he said. “They have 100 percent graduation rate, which is great. That’s the kind of stuff I’m looking at. The location and stuff like that is a big concern of mine because I know kids aren’t going to stay on campus for four years, they’re going to go off campus. So the surrounding areas and that kind of stuff.”

Williams will get the chance to see the South Bend community for himself when he joins Shumate and Wright on their visit to Notre Dame this weekend.

“I’m looking forward to it,” he said. “I’m very excited about going to a prestigious and historic university such as Notre Dame. That’s a once-in-a-lifetime thing, just to even step on the campus. I’m definitely looking forward to that.”

Shumate has already taken official visits to Rutgers and South Carolina and has a couple more planned following his appearance in the U.S. Army All-American Bowl in San Antonio next month.

“He’s been to Georgia Tech for a one-day camp, but we want to go back for a visit,” Williams said. “He really wants me to see Georgia Tech. He said, ‘Dad, you have to see it. It’s beautiful.’ We’re going to check Georgia Tech out the week after the Army All-American Game. He wants to check out Michigan State after that. Those will be our last two officials.”

Shumate had hoped to make a decision in San Antonio, but he’ll wait to pick from his five finalists until after he’s seen them all.

Diaco, who recruits New Jersey for Notre Dame, is a major reason why the Irish remain on the list with Shumate.

“The camaraderie and the relationship that him and Diaco have developed,” Williams said when

asked about the draw to Notre Dame. “They have been talking for quite some time now and they have developed a pretty good relationship. Elijah just said, ‘Dad, I really like Coach Diaco and the stuff he talks about and the way he talks to me. They have a really high interest in me, so I want to go check it out.’

“Plus, the history and education of Notre Dame played a big part. We know that you can’t lose with a Notre Dame education. Even if football is not an option after the next level, we know he’ll be professional in something else other than football with the Notre Dame education. That is the big draw to Notre Dame.”

Shumate and his father feel honored to be receiving such strong interest from a school of Notre Dame’s caliber.

“There’s no bigger honor than to have a school like Notre Dame really interested in you coming to their university and to represent their university on the football field as well as a student,” Williams said. “There aren’t too many bigger honors in the country than that. We’re definitely appreciative to that and we’re going to see if that’s the place for us.”