

News Release

Humhej Finds Comfortable Place in UMN Crookston to Obtain Second Degree and Wrap up Her Softball Career

By Michelle Christopherson, Director of Outreach and Engagement on Wednesday, March 17, 2021

CROOKSTON, Minn. - Katie Humhej, right-hand pitcher from Surrey, British Columbia, joined UMN Crookston's softball team last fall to wrap up a second degree and complete her NCAA eligibility after three seasons at Long Island University Post prior to the program's decision to merge sports from LIU Post and LIU Brooklyn.



"The support here is unbelievable," she said. Humhej visited UMN Crookston one weekend last year when she found out she could complete her last year of athletic eligibility and earn a second degree in one year. "Everyone being so friendly and outgoing right away stepping on campus, I felt like I had a second home," said Humhej. "I loved the campus; honestly, the dorms are what got me," she said. "Crookston had more than the traditional residential life, it was the whole package. Right away everyone made me feel welcomed, and as an international student, Rae French, has been a big part of my time at UMN Crookston," she said. Humhej was excited she could finish a second degree in a short period of time, play the rest of her NCAA softball eligibility, and enjoy the personal touch Crookston offered. "It was just something I just couldn't turn down," she said.

Humhej also plays for a national team, the Czech Republic women's national softball team. "I am a dual citizen, between Canada and the Czech republic, my dad was born there. I was noticed by the team when I was 18. They were playing in my city in the world championships. My dad was speaking Czech with one of the parents in the stands and one of the club managers overhead and was wondering a bit about his heritage." Humhej says the rest is history, "they came and watched me and offered me a position on the women's national team."

Humhej says the team atmosphere at UMN Crookston is one thing she will take back to her national team. "Being part of the game and being involved, as a pitcher I won't play every game, and here I have learned there are roles I can do from the sidelines to be part of the game wherever you are on the field," she says.

So what's next for Katie? She will graduate in May completing her degree in health sciences and will await to hear of her acceptance to graduate school. She will return to her national team, of the Czech Republic, for competition. "We lost in the Olympic qualifiers two years ago and didn't compete this past year due to COVID. The next chance for the Olympics will be to qualify for the 2028 games in Los Angeles. Humhej says that is a way off and she is hoping to play as long as possible and, in the meantime, get back to British Columbia and maybe go to graduate school. "I have been away for five years. I miss my family, and they miss me."

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