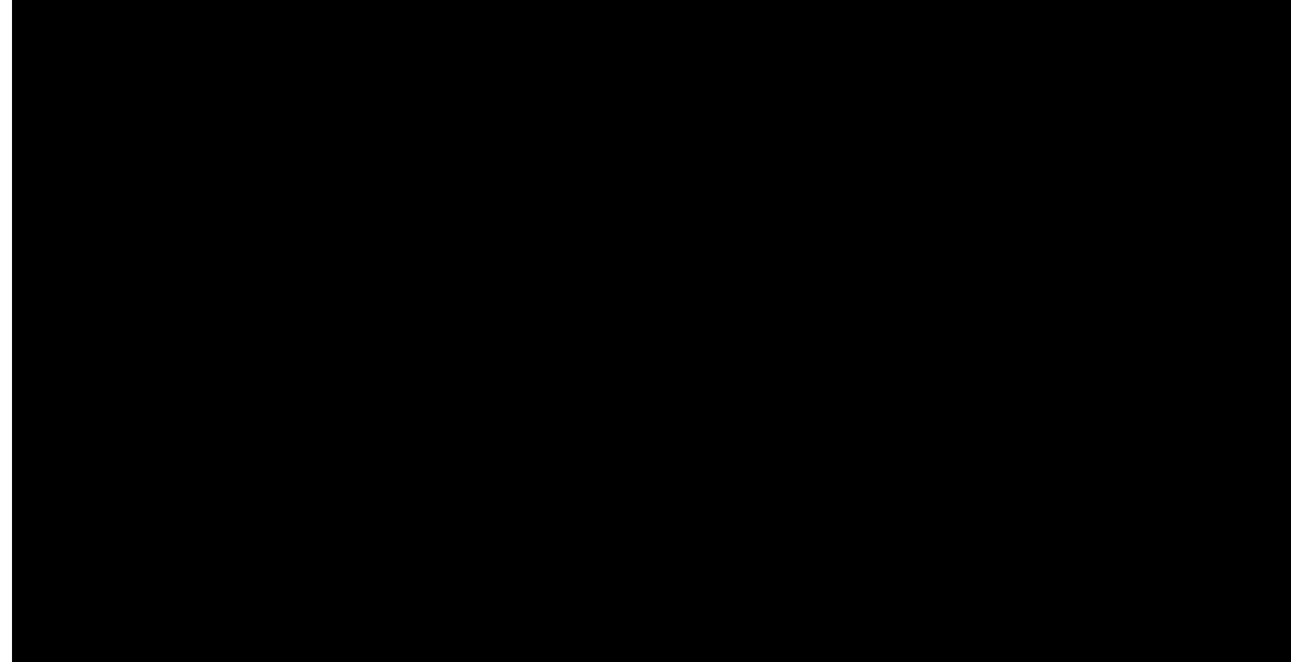




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## Drive To Succeed as Collegiate Athlete Comes Naturally for McCall



**CROOKSTON, Minn.** - Growing up going to Purdue University football games, UMC freshman forward [Lorna McCall](#) had been exposed from a young age of what it means to be a college athlete. Her father Benjamin McCall was a running back for the Boilermakers from 1977-80, amassing over 1,000 yards rushing and nearly 400 yards receiving. McCall would get a shot at the NFL with the St. Louis Cardinals. In her father, Lorna found a model of what it would take to succeed.

"My Dad played three sports in high school and he could have played basketball in college but he played college football Purdue," McCall said. "Growing up I was always on the Purdue campus on Saturday. Having him as a model, and a teacher and a coach has pushed me to play at this level!"

However, it wasn't just her Dad's collegiate past that pushed her to succeed. It was a drive that she got from her Mom. A 22 year veteran as a police officer, Shirley McCall has been equally important in getting her ready to be a collegiate athlete.

"My Mom isn't an athlete but she probably could kick my butt as a police officer," McCall said. "We always race each other. She works out three times a day. My parents are very active in my life."

Though her Mom could have easily settled in as a police officer, she has found that drive later in life to make the move to the fire department as she is currently working to become a firefighter.

It is that work ethic and drive that she gets from both of her parents that has also helped her as she made the push to become a collegiate soccer player. First introduced to the game at age six, McCall spent most of her childhood focused on basketball, but as a Senior at Marist High School, she would change her focus and playing soccer collegiately would become more of a reality.

McCall would be recruited by several schools but would ultimately choose to play for Coach [Joe Alianiello](#) because of a connection that was formed during the recruiting process.

"The recruiting process was awesome. I got to meet a lot of great people," McCall said. "Coach Joe (Alianiello) was one of them which was one of the biggest reasons I came here."

The choice to come to Minnesota Crookston has paid off for McCall, as she has started six games with one goal as a freshman. A rarity to be able to have such a big impact on a team in your first season of collegiate soccer.

"It is amazing to get this opportunity," McCall said. "It is a blessing to be starting as a freshman, a lot of people don't get to have this opportunity to play."

One of the biggest adjustments for McCall has been learning the speed of the collegiate game.

"The speed of the game is a lot different," McCall said. "Those 90 minutes have never felt longer in my life. So it was definitely an adjustment with my conditioning. A lot of people like [Courtney Armbrorst](#) and [Delaney McIntyre](#), along with the back line and the midfield, they are great leaders and upperclassmen. They teach me how they play and what I can do to be better so we can be better as a unit."

While the style of play and starting as a freshman has been a big change, it has also been different making the adjustment from the South Side of Chicago to Crookston, Minn. She has exchanged the skyscrapers and the busy streets for the fields and horses and cows around the Red River Valley.

"It is a pretty big change," McCall said. "My teammates joke around with me about the cows and the horses because I'm not used to it but I like it. Coming from a big city it was a lot to get used to it. We have a Walmart close to campus, whereas in Chicago you will have five or six stores close by. I like the change. I think it is a lot easier to focus here than Chicago."

One thing is similar between Crookston and Chicago. The wind. Moving from the "Windy City" of Chicago, it hasn't as big of an adjustment to the Crookston wind.

"Chicago, it gets cold, but the wind up here is a relentless," McCall said. "Chicago has prepared me more than most places would for the Crookston wind."

The bottom line though is McCall is enjoying her time and is enjoying learning the game and progressing as a player under Coach Alianiello. A Coach, who understands her and has the ability to make her better.

"One word to describe Coach Joe is passionate," McCall said. "Playing for Coach Joe is great. You know that when he is yelling at you that he really wants the best for you and the team. He played Division I soccer, you can't forget that. He mentions that a lot. It is great to have a coach that knows the game, that loves the game and respects the game and wants everyone else to feel the same way about it."

Alianiello and McCall don't come from that different of home environments as Alianiello was constantly pushed to a certain standard, growing up like McCall, with a parent who is a police officer. Alianiello's father Lt. Anthony Alianiello is Commander of Criminal Investigations for the Altoona Police Department in Altoona, Pa.

"It is great having someone like Coach to talk to and someone that can relate to me and the way I grew up," McCall said.

While the final product of McCall is unknown as she still has three-and-a-half years in the Maroon and Gold. One thing is a certainty. She will continue to have the drive she has developed from her former collegiate and professional athlete Dad and her police officer Mom.

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**PLAYERS MENTIONED** ▾

<b>#9 Courtney Armbrorst</b> F / 5' 8" / Senior	<b>#12 Delaney McIntyre</b> MF/D / 5' 3" / Senior
<b>#25 Lorna McCall</b> F / 5' 8" / Freshman	

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