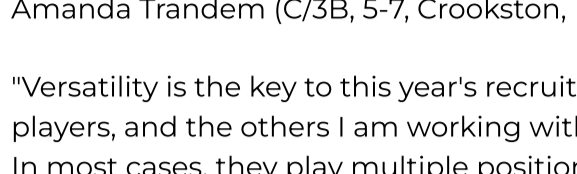




Softball | 4/14/2017 11:03:00 AM | Shawn D. Smith, Sports Information Director

## Golden Eagle Softball Signs Four Student-Athletes to NLI's

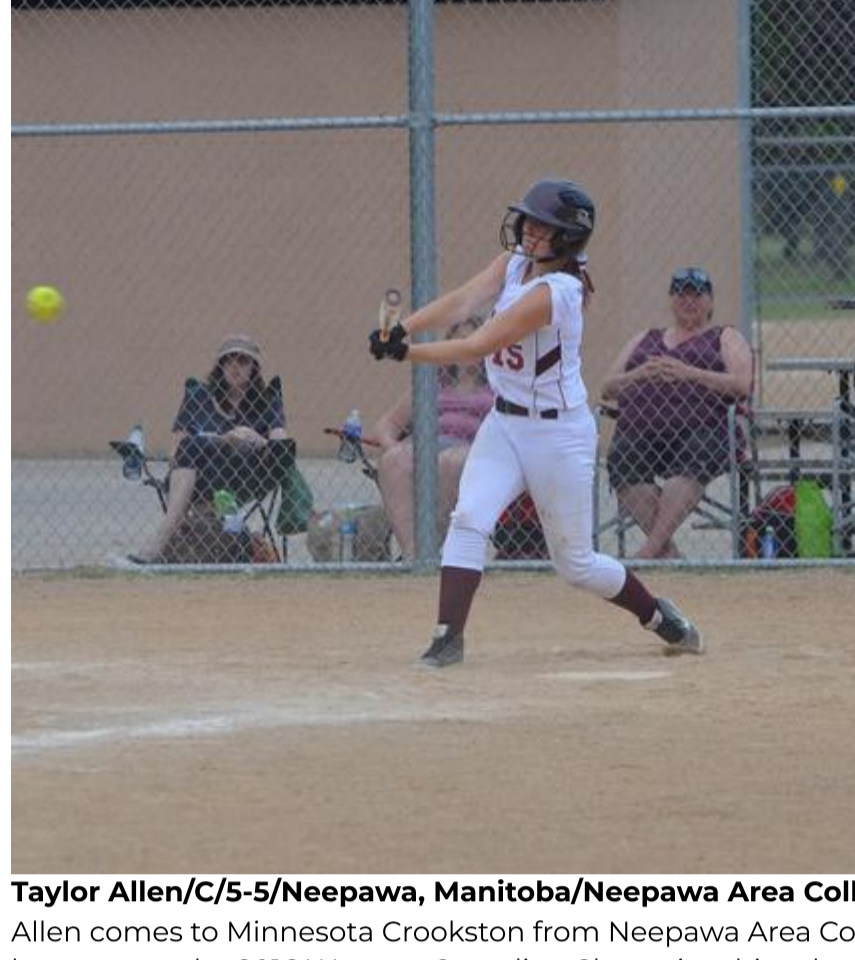


**CROOKSTON, Minn.** – The University of Minnesota Crookston softball program announced the signing of four student-athletes to National Letters of Intent to begin playing for the Golden Eagles during the 2017-18 athletic season. The Golden Eagles have signed Taylor Allen (C, 5-5, Neepawa, Manitoba/Neepawa Area Collegiate Institute), Jordan Peterson (C/UT, 5-7, Lakeville, Minn./Lakeville North H.S.), Haley Strachan (OF, 5-2, Phoenix, Ariz./Paradise Valley C.C.) and Amanda Trandem (C/3B, 5-7, Crookston, Minn./Crookston H.S.).

"Versatility is the key to this year's recruiting class," said Head Coach [Don Stopa](#). "These four players, and the others I am working with right now, add depth everywhere for the program. In most cases, they play multiple positions and play them well."

The four signees are the first for the Golden Eagles for the 2017 signing class. They will help to fill the void of four graduating seniors for Minnesota Crookston with [Sammy Knudson](#) (Sr., RHP, Fergus Falls, Minn.), [Samantha LeMay](#) (Sr., DP/1B, Belle Plaine, Minn.), [Bailey Braatz](#) (Sr., RHP, Buffalo, Minn.) and [Jozie Garner](#) (Sr., OF, Eureka, Kan.).

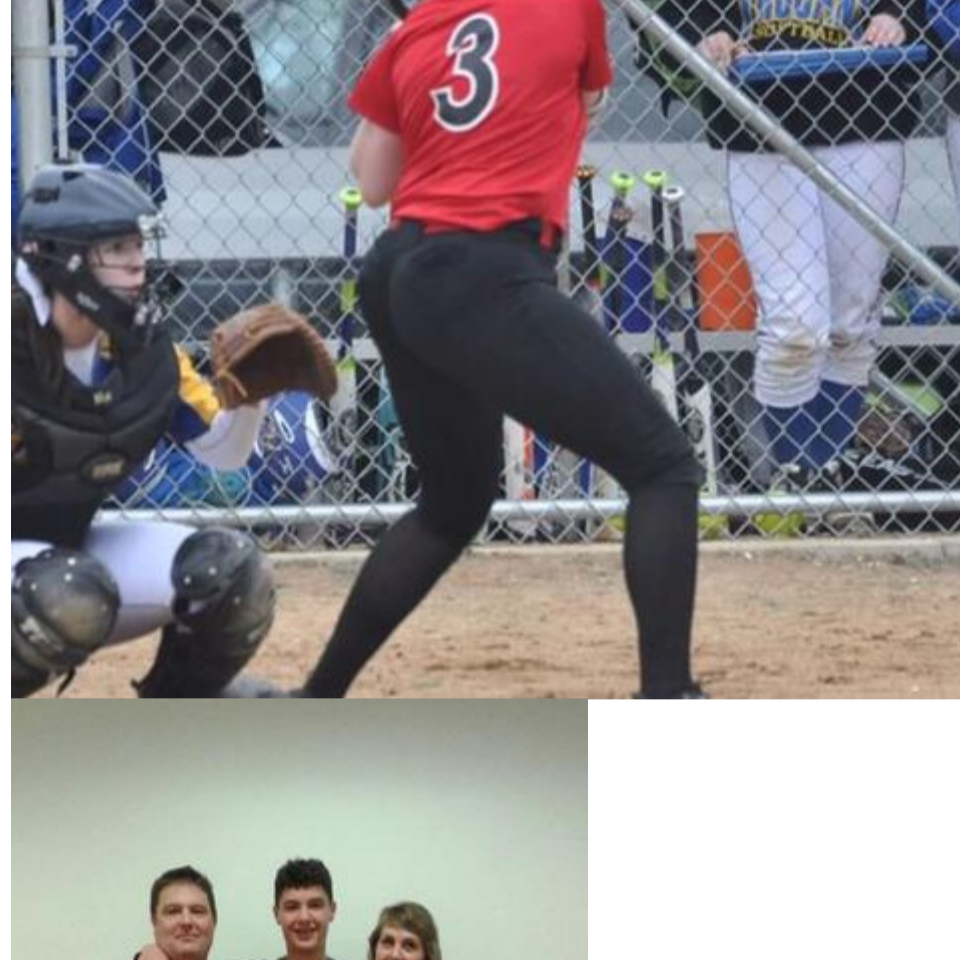
The Golden Eagle softball program has continued to improve in Stopa's three seasons leading the ship. Minnesota Crookston has already matched their win total of 11 from the 2016 season during the 2017 campaign. They are just one victory away from tying the school record of 12 wins set in 2004. The Golden Eagles will return a strong core for the 2018 season, which will be aided by the versatility Coach Stopa has been able to bring in with the signing class thus far.



**Taylor Allen/C/5-5/Neepawa, Manitoba/Neepawa Area Collegiate Institute**  
Allen comes to Minnesota Crookston from Neepawa Area Collegiate Institute. She helped lead her team to the 2016 Western Canadian Championship where they won a silver medal. During the championship, Allen was selected as the Championship MVP. She was a two-time *High School Provincial Game Star* in 2016. In 2015, she was also named a *High School Provincial Game Star*. In 2014, Allen was selected to the *High School Provincial All-Star Team*. She led her high school squad to the provincial championship in 2014 and the provincial "b" championship in 2013.

She is the daughter of Shelley and Curt Allen. Allen was born Nov. 28, 1999. She plans to major in criminal justice.

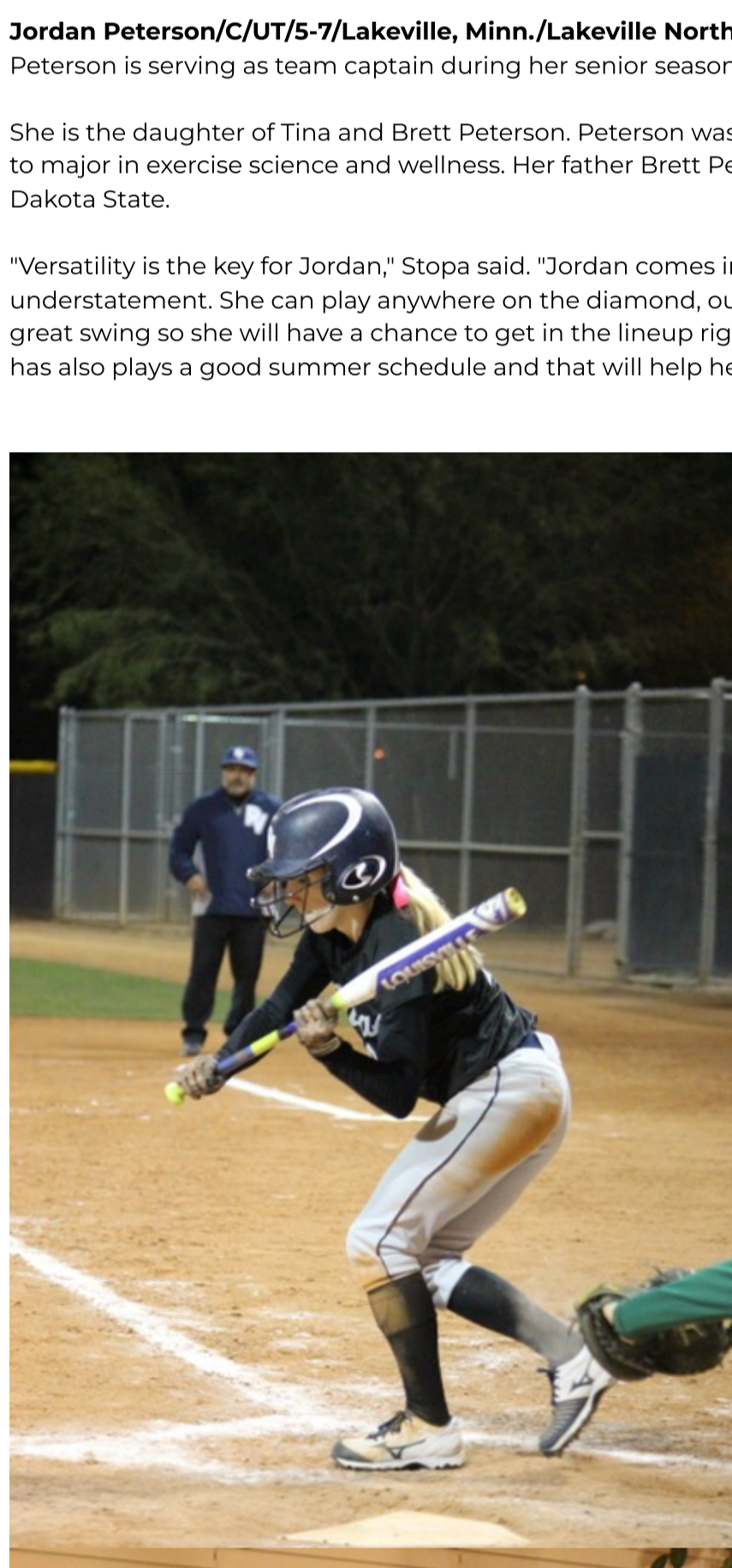
"Taylor is a great athlete," Stopa said. "I really like her as a receiver behind the dish, and she is good enough athletically to help us in the outfield too. This summer she will play for Smitty's Terminators which is one of the best club programs in Canada. The strong summer schedule will get her ready to compete at the college level next year."



**Jordan Peterson/C/UT/5-7/Lakeville, Minn./Lakeville North H.S.**  
Peterson is serving as team captain during her senior season for Lakeville North High School.

She is the daughter of Tina and Brett Peterson. Peterson was born March 20, 1999. She plans to major in exercise science and wellness. Her father Brett Peterson played football at North Dakota State.

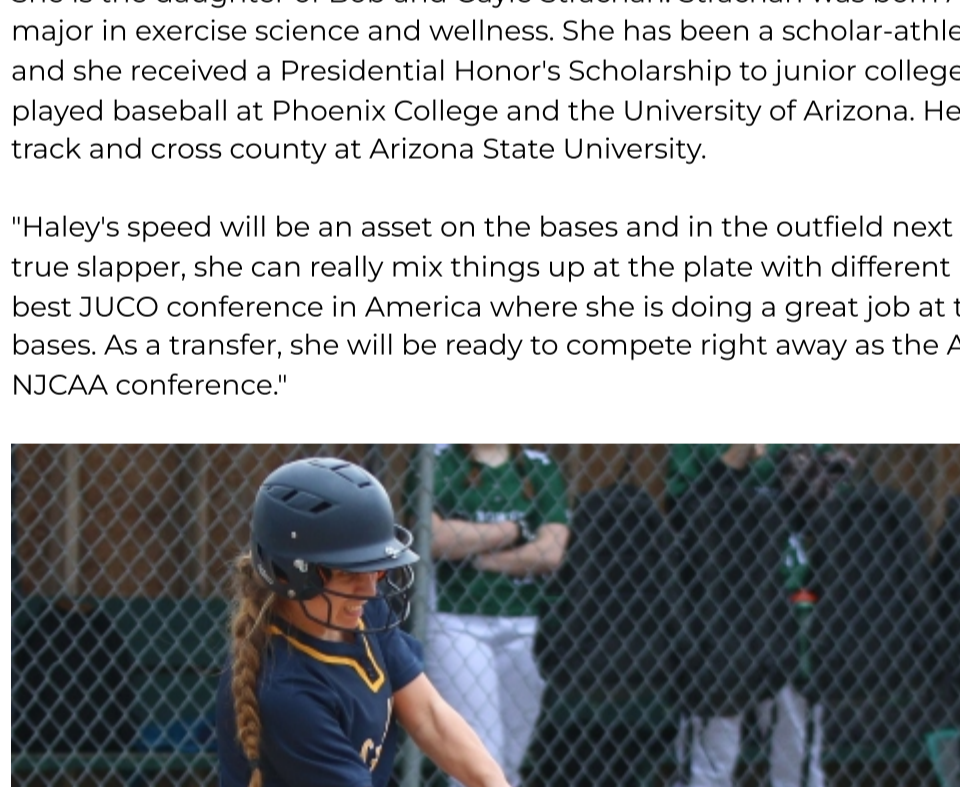
"Versatility is the key for Jordan," Stopa said. "Jordan comes in as a catcher utility and that is an understatement. She can play anywhere on the diamond, outside the circle. She also has a great swing so she will have a chance to get in the lineup right away due to her versatility. She has also plays a good summer schedule and that will help her get ready for the fall"



**Haley Strachan/OF/5-2/Phoenix, Ariz./Paradise Valley C.C.**  
Strachan played community college softball at Paradise Valley Community College. She is a left-handed hitter. She is hitting .314 with four RBI's and four runs scored as a sophomore. Strachan has tallied nine stolen bases for Paradise Valley Community College. As a freshman, she hit .308 with four RBI's and eight runs scored. Strachan notched seven stolen bases as a freshman. She attended Pinnacle High School as a prep.

She is the daughter of Bob and Gayle Strachan. Strachan was born Aug. 14, 1997. She plans to major in exercise science and wellness. She has been a scholar-athlete at her junior college and she received a Presidential Honor's Scholarship to junior college. Her father Bob Strachan played baseball at Phoenix College and the University of Arizona. Her uncle Eric Strachan ran track and cross county at Arizona State University.

"Haley's speed will be an asset on the bases and in the outfield next year," Stopa said. "As a true slapper, she can really mix things up at the plate with different looks. She plays in the best JUCO conference in America where she is doing a great job at the plate and on the bases. As a transfer, she will be ready to compete right away as the ACCAC is a high level NJCAA conference."



**Amanda Trandem/C/3B/5-7/Crookston, Minn./Crookston H.S.**  
As a junior, Trandem hit .449 with nine doubles and 31 hits for the softball team. Trandem has primarily been a catcher for the Pirates. She also played volleyball where she was coached by [Don Stopa's](#) wife Ashley Stopa. Trandem played outside hitter for the volleyball team. She has been awarded a Merit Scholarship by Minnesota Crookston.

She is the daughter of Cathy and Scott Trandem. Trandem was born Jan. 27, 1999. She plans to major in biology. She joins former Crookston High School product Brooke Vattthauer as former Pirate softball players to play at Minnesota Crookston. Her relative Megan Weiland played basketball at Northland Community and Technical College.

"Amanda is a local kid with a lot of upside," Stopa said. "She is a big, strong kid who will do what it takes to get better. I've had glimpses of a college hitter at times and if we can polish her up a little, I think she has got a chance to help us. Being from Crookston, I have had a chance to watch her play for three years now, and I look forward to seeing her play in the maroon and gold."

All signees are contingent upon admission to UMC and compliance with NCAA rules, including certification by the NCAA Eligibility Center. Everyone released today has signed their National Letter of Intent prior to release of information.

For more information, visit the Golden Eagle Athletics website at [www.goldeneaglesports.com](http://www.goldeneaglesports.com).

Follow the Golden Eagles on Facebook at Golden Eagle Sports and on Twitter at @UMCAthletics.

The University of Minnesota Crookston is a NCAA Division II university located in the Red River Valley of Northwest Minnesota. UMC sponsors 11 intercollegiate athletic teams with membership in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate conference (NSIC) and the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA). The NSIC is a 16-team conference with schools situated in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska.

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PLAYERS MENTIONED	
<b>#17 Bailey Braatz</b> P/DP / 5' 9" / Senior / R	<b>#22 Jozie Garner</b> OF / 5' 4" / Senior / L
<b>#2 Sammy Knudson</b> P/UT / 5' 6" / Senior / R	<b>#4 Samantha LeMay</b> DP/1B / 5' 6" / Senior / R

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