



Baseball | 6/18/2015 9:49:00 AM | Shawn Smith, Sports Information Director

## UMC Baseball Adds Five Student-Athletes to Signing Class



**CROOKSTON, Minn.-** The University of Minnesota Crookston baseball team announced the addition of five student-athletes to their 2015 signing class. The Golden Eagles have added **Esten Beneda** (RHP, 6-2 215, Lankin, N.D./Fordville-Lankin H.S.), **Skyler Carlson** (LHP, 6-1 215, Thompson, N.D./Lake Region State College), **Andrew Myer** (2B/SS, 5-9 170, Fargo, N.D./Fargo South H.S.), **Jeremy Spinner** (2B/SS, 5-8 140, Phoenix, Ariz./Dakota College at Bottineau (N.D.) and **Anthony Stewart** (OF, 5-10 154, Oak Harbor, Wash./Southeast Community College (Neb.). All five have signed either National Letters of Intent or Institutional Letters of Intent to play for the Golden Eagles beginning during the 2016 season.

The five additions to the signing class bring the overall total to 18 incoming players for the Golden Eagles. The Golden Eagles have added eight junior college signees and 10 high school signees. The incoming UMC players will join 25 returnees for the Golden Eagles to give UMC 43 student-athletes heading into their Fall exhibition schedule.

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.

### Esten Beneda (RHP, 6-2 215, Lankin, N.D./Fordville-Lankin H.S.)

Beneda has been a three-time All-Region pick for Park River/Fordville-Lankin H.S. He also competed for the football and basketball teams. As a member of the football team, Beneda was a First Team All-Region selection during his final two seasons. He was named Player of the Game on numerous occasions in all three sports.

Beneda is the son of Jon and Lori and Beneda. He was born March 4, 1997. Beneda plans to major in agricultural business. His aunt Angela Cost was a basketball player at UMC. His uncle, Bryan Malone played baseball for the Golden Eagles. Beneda's mother Lori played basketball and softball at Valley City State University.

"We are very high on Esten because of his natural ability," Gust said. "He is a super student-athlete, excelling on the field and in the classroom. He will need some time, but we believe the sky is the limit for Esten."

### Skyler Carlson (LHP, 6-1 215, Thompson, N.D./Lake Region State College

Carlson gives UMC a third left-handed arm for the 2016 season. Carlson played junior college baseball at Lake Region State College in Devils Lake, N.D. As a sophomore, he appeared in eight games with seven starts with 34.1 innings pitched. Carlson had 57 strikeouts on the season and had a 3-3 mark with two complete games. Carlson also hit for Lake Region State, batting .307 with one home run and 22 runs batted in (RBIs). As a freshman, he appeared in 18.1 innings pitched with four starts with 22 strikeouts and a 5.40 earned runs average (ERA). Carlson was an All-Region II pick at Thompson Public School in 2012 and 2013. As a senior, Carlson hit .447 with 15 runs batted in.

Carlson is the son of Bruce and Peggy Carlson. He was born April 10, 1995 and plans to major in sports and rec management.

"Skyler is just now developing as a pitcher," Gust said. "He had a good junior college career but we believe he has potential to be even more effective. With further development and maturing, he can be a key piece in building our program."

### Andrew Myer (2B/SS, 5-9 170, Fargo, N.D./Fargo South H.S.)

Myer was an All-Eastern Dakota Conference selection for Fargo South H.S. He is a left-handed hitter and hit .338 last season for the Bruins. Myer also played soccer and hockey. He was named Offensive Player of the Year for Fargo South H.S.

He is the son of Alicia and Gary Myer and was born Jan. 1, 1997. Myer plans to major in business administration. His brother Anthony Myer played at Valley City State University.

"Andrew has some really good attributes," Gust said. "He has good defensive skills and hits from the left side, two attributes we're looking to fill for the upcoming season. He has some improving to do, but he's the type of student-athlete that can do some good things for us in due time."

### Jeremy Spinner (2B/SS, Phoenix, Ariz./Dakota College at Bottineau (N.D.)

Spinner led the team as a freshman with a .320 batting average with 18 runs scored. He also had 13 runs batted in, with three doubles and three triples. Spinner started 31 games for Dakota College as a freshman. He was named the Defensive Most Valuable Player for his junior college team. In high school, he played four years of baseball for Cortez H.S. He was also on the varsity football team for two seasons.

Spinner is the son of Gary and Kristy Spinner. He was born Jan. 21, 1995. Spinner plans to major in elementary education.

"Jeremy has the desire and passion we are looking for in our program," Gust said. "He adds some muchneeded depth and will be given an opportunity to help us as we build our program."

### Anthony Stewart (OF, 5-10 154, Oak Harbor, Wash./Southeast C.C. (Neb.)

Stewart played junior college baseball at Southeast C.C. in Beatrice, Neb, where he was an All-Nebraska Community College Athletic Conference pick. Southeast C.C. went 42-21 during the 2015 season, winning the Region XIII Tournament with a 7-2 victory over Dakota County Community College. His team also competed in the North Plains District Tournament. Stewart started 26 games with 10 runs scored and 12 stolen bases as a sophomore. As a freshman, he appeared in 34 games with seven runs scored and nine runs batted in (RBIs) with six stolen bases.

Stewart is the son of Phillipian and Kelly Stewart. He was born Aug. 30, 1995.

"Anthony's speed, arm strength and defensive abilities are top notch," Gust said. "He comes from a great junior college program so we expect him to compete for serious playing time from day one."

The newcomers join a team who accomplished a lot in Gust's first season leading the team. The Golden Eagles went 14-36, breaking their overall wins mark of 10 set during the 2012 season. They went 8-26 in league play and broke the conference wins mark, as well for the University, set during the 2003 season.

The Golden Eagles return one of their strongest senior classes in recent history including starters in the field [Ryan Haggstrom](#) (1B/RHP, Apple Valley, Minn.), [Kenny Perez](#) (DH/IF, Orlando, Fla.), [Thomas Kinsella](#) (IF, North Branch, Minn.), [Colton Haight](#) (C/OF, Rogers, Minn.) and [Dalton Parks](#) (OF, West Valley City, Utah). Haggstrom and Perez led the team in hitting, with Haggstrom hitting .346, while Perez batted .341. Haggstrom was also an ace in the field earning the NSIC Gold Glove at first base with a .995 fielding percentage

UMC's rotation will also be led by several senior returnees including starters [Nolan Wahlberg](#) (RHP, Blaine, Minn.), [Jarad Nelson](#) (RHP, Karlstad, Minn.), [Luke Thoma](#) (RHP, Little Falls, Minn.) and [Trevor Buttermore](#) (RHP, North St. Paul, Minn.). Wahlberg led the team with a 6-4 mark and a 4.53 earned runs average in 77.2 innings pitched.

With the additions, UMC has strengthened several areas including pitching, where the Golden Eagles currently sit at 19 pitchers for the 2016 season. The Golden Eagles had 13 pitchers for the 2015 season. The Golden Eagles have also added depth at several spots including the middle infield, catcher and third base, along with other areas.

### 2015 Recruiting Class High School

- Nate Albrecht (LHP/1B, 6-1 215, Wahpeton, N.D./Wahpeton H.S.)
- Esten Beneda (RHP, 6-2 215, Lankin, N.D./Fordville-Lankin H.S.)
- Reed Hjelle (1B, 6-2 195, East Grand Forks, Minn./East Grand Forks H.S.)
- Aaron Hoilcraft (LHP, 5-11 175, Crookston, Minn./Crookston H.S.)
- Andrew Myer (2B/SS, 5-9 170, Fargo, N.D./Fargo South H.S.)
- Eric Newman (RHP, 6-3 188, Buffalo, Minn./Buffalo H.S.)
- Wyatt Peppel (OF, 6-0 225, Greenbush, Minn./Badger-Middle River-Greenbush H.S.)
- Clarke Peterson (C, 5-6 175, East Grand Forks, Minn./East Grand Forks H.S.)
- Zach Seipel (C, 6-2 185, Eagan, Minn./Eagan H.S.)
- Trevor Seis (3B, 6-0 210, Antigo, Wis./Antigo H.S.)

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.

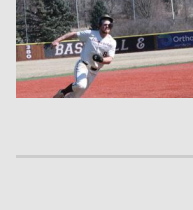
The University of Minnesota Crookston is a NCAA Division II university located in the Red River Valley of Northwest Minnesota. UMC sponsors 11 intercollegiate athletic teams with membership in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate conference (NSIC) and the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA). The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

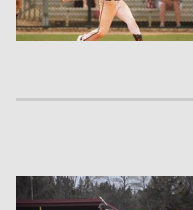
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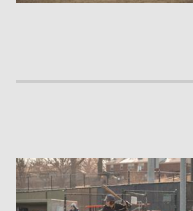
**PLAYERS MENTIONED** ▾

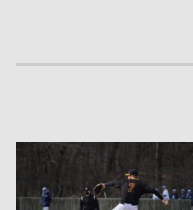
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| <p><b>#14 Trevor Buttermore</b><br/>P / 6' 2" / Junior / R</p> <p><b>#18 Colton Haight</b><br/>C/OF / 6' 0" / Junior / R</p> <p><b>#4 Jarad Nelson</b><br/>P / 5' 10" / Junior / R</p> <p><b>#32 Nolan Wahlberg</b><br/>P / 6' 6" / Junior / R</p> <p><b>#29 Kenny Perez</b><br/>1B/DH / 5' 6" / Junior / R</p> | <p><b>#8 Ryan Haggstrom</b><br/>1B/P / 6' 5" / Junior / R</p> <p><b>#16 Luke Thoma</b><br/>P / 5' 11" / Junior / R</p> <p><b>#5 Dalton Parks</b><br/>OF / 5' 9" / Junior / R</p> <p><b>#26 Thomas Kinsella</b><br/>IF / 6' 1" / Junior / R</p> |
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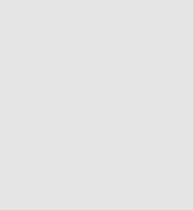
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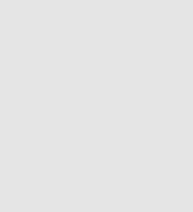
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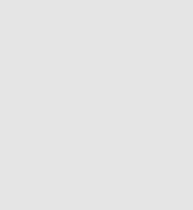
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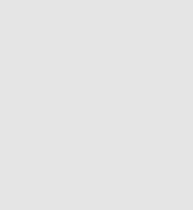
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