



## THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COYOTE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

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### USD Women's Basketball Announces Signing of Five Recruits for 2009-10 Season

VERMILLION, S.D. -- **Ryun Williams**, the head women's basketball coach at The University of South Dakota, has announced the signing of five student-athletes for the 2009-10 season.

Signing letters of intent on Wednesday, Nov. 12 to continue their athletic and academic careers at USD included **Emily Guenther** of Altoona, Iowa; **Pamela January** of Richfield, Minn.; **McKayla Knudson** of South Sioux City, Neb.; **Samantha Mehr** of Apple Valley, Minn., and **Jamie Young** of Great Falls, Mon.

"We're really excited about the first ever Division I recruiting class at The University of South Dakota," Williams said. "This is a very talented, dedicated, group of student-athletes. We feel we addressed a lot of our needs with this class. All of these athletes have been extremely well coached in high school and in the AAU circuit and will bring a winning mentality to Coyote Basketball. In addition, they are all great students with great priorities. We look forward to them leading Coyote Basketball into its Division I future."

**Guenther** is a 6-foot-1 forward who is a senior at Southeast Polk High School in Pleasant Hill, Iowa. She was named first-team All-Conference in the Central Iowa Metropolitan League and also was named Academic All-Conference. In 2007-08, she averaged 12 points, eight rebounds and two assists per game while shooting 35 percent from 3-point range. In 2006-07, she played in only four games because of injury. As a sophomore, she was honorable mention All-Conference as well. For her career, she has 458 points and 282 rebounds. She is also a state qualifier in the shot put event.

"Emily is a tough, physical post player with the ability to score inside and from the 3-point line," Williams said. "She has a great motor and the ability to lead. A true basketball junkie, Emily understands how to work and the dedication necessary to succeed. Emily's passion for the game will be a tremendous asset to this program."

**January** is a 5-foot-9 guard who is a senior at Richfield High School. She is a two-time Classic Suburban All-Conference Selection, a two-time MVP, and averaged 12 points per game last season. She also is a 3-year letterwinner in basketball and has been a team captain. She also was the city and regional free-throw champion and state runner-up. In addition to being a standout in basketball, January is also a four-year letterwinner in softball and three-year letterwinner in volleyball.

"Pam is an exceptional athlete," Williams said. "She will provide tremendous strength and versatility on the perimeter for us. We wanted to gain athleticism with this class and Pam's abilities will definitely make us better on both ends of the floor. Pam is a winner and will bring that same mentality to our program."

**Knudson** is a 6-foot-1 forward who is a senior at South Sioux City High School. She has started all four years of her career and was the first eighth grader to be named to the Pinnacle Bank All-Star Nebraska team. As a junior in 2007-08, she was an All-Nebraska first-team selection by the Lincoln Journal Star and a first-team Super-Stater in all classes by the Omaha World Herald. She is a three-time All-Metro and two-times All-Conference selection. She is also a two-time All-State selection as well. She was ranked in the top 10 in Class B for scoring, field goal percentage, rebounds and steals. For her career, Knudson has 1,040 points and 534 rebounds.

"Coming from arguably one of the greatest high school programs in the country, McKayla has a tremendous upside as a Division I basketball player," Williams said. "McKayla is very long and athletic. Her ability to run the floor and play both inside and outside fits our system. She has been a great scorer in Nebraska High School Basketball as well as a state champion. We are excited to have McKayla join our program."

**Mehr** is a 5-foot-9 guard who is a senior at Eastview High School. She was an All-State honorable mention pick by the St. Paul Pioneer

Press and was a two-time All-Lake Conference selection. She has lettered four straight years in basketball and was part of back-to-back Lake Conference championship teams at Eastview. She was also part of Eastview's team which finished third at the Class 4A state tournament in 2008. She finished second in the Lake Conference in three-pointers as a junior after leading the league in threes as a sophomore. She was also voted the team's best defender in 2007. In addition to being a standout in basketball, Mehr is also a standout in track and soccer at Eastview High School.

"Sam has a tremendous feel for the game," Williams said. "She has a great ability to shoot the basketball and make players around her better. Sam is a player that will do whatever it takes for the team to be successful. She is perhaps the most well-rounded player in this class. It will be fun to coach such a competitive and intelligent player."

**Young** a 6-foot forward, will be transferring from Clarendon College in Clarendon, Texas. As a freshman at Clarendon, she averaged 9.0 points and 10.2 rebounds per game. In addition, she also led the conference in rebounding and ranked 24th nationally in that category. Prior to playing at Clarendon, Young was the All-District MVP at Charles M. Russell High School in Scurry, Texas. She also was named the All-District Defensive Player of the Year as a junior.

"Jamie will join our program after a successful career at the junior college level," Williams said. "As a freshman she was 24th in the country in rebounding. She brings toughness and experience that will elevate the play of others around her. It will be nice to have a player with 60 plus college games under her belt. Jamie is another versatile player that can produce on the block as well as from the perimeter."

The USD women's basketball team will open the 2008-09 season at home on Saturday, Nov. 15 at 1 p.m. versus Northwest Missouri State University.