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## Softball Inks Five Standouts

First-year co-head coaches Sarah O'Malley-Fisher and Tom Gray bring in athletic class of local and west coast talent.

Dec. 5, 2001

**Chicago, Ill.** - First-year co-head coaches Sarah O'Malley-Fisher and [Tom Gray](#) wasted little time making sure that the UIC softball team's winning tradition will continue as they inked five highly-touted players to National Letters of Intent during the early signing period.

The group includes a trio of local products in Meghan Gallagher and Brittany McIntyre from 2001 Illinois State Championship runner-up Sandburg High School, and Rebecca Wilson out of Homewood-Flossmoor High School. The Flames also made sure to keep its west coast flavor with the signing of Michelle Miller, who hails from La Habra, Calif., while also inking the first player in UIC history from the state of Nevada in Reno native, Joyce Cathey.

"We are ecstatic about our first recruiting class," O'Malley-Fisher said. "We feel this is a great foundation for the direction in which we are headed with this program.

"Not only are these young ladies great softball players, but each of them is an outstanding all-around athlete," Gray continued. "Each of them could have played and excelled at any other sports. They all have a blend of power, speed and agility which will help them contribute to our team immediately."

Meghan Gallagher and Brittany McIntyre should make a quick impact for the Flames, coming from one of the state's top

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high school programs in Sandburg.

Gallagher, a first baseman/utility player by trade, was the Eagles leader in fielding percentage in 2001 and proved to be a big-game player at the plate. During last year's regionals, she delivered the game-winning hit in the ninth inning of the semifinals versus Richards, before going 3-for-3 in Sandburg's regional final triumph over Stagg.

McIntyre, meanwhile, is a three-time all-conference (SICA West) and all-area selection, while earning a spot on the 2000 all-state second team and 2001 all-state first team for Sandburg. The pitcher/first baseman, who was the 2001 Star Newspaper Player of the Year, went 13-6 in the circle last season for the Eagles and tallied 112 strikeouts in just 140 innings pitched.

Rebecca Wilson, out of Homewood-Flossmoor, rounds out UIC's local group of signees. The utility player, who saw most of her time at shortstop last season, batted .469 in 2001 with a team-high 36 RBI en route to All-SICA East honors and a spot on the Illinois Herald All-Area Team.

Joyce Cathey will join the Flames from Reno High School where she is a two-time all-state honoree as the starting shortstop and switch-hitting leadoff batter. Besides her prep accolades, which include being named 2001 Reno High School Offensive Player of the Year, Cathey has also guided the High Sierra Diamonds travel team to five state championships and is currently the starting shortstop for the Salinas Storm.

Rounding out the class is California native, Michelle Miller. The three-time all-league softball performer, who earned league rookie of the year in 1999 and league MVP honors in 2001, is a lefty leadoff hitter for Sonora High School in La Habra, Calif., where she saw time at second base, shortstop and the outfield last season. Miller, a strong all-around athlete, is also a two-time varsity volleyball letterwinner at Sonora while also playing travel softball for one of California's premier clubs, the Orange County Batbusters.

This large class will help the Flames deal with the loss of six seniors after this season, including all-conference performers [Edel Leyden](#) and [Jennifer Tiffany](#), along with key performers [Rory Gonzales-Gould](#), [Amber Stachura](#), [Kelly Chenoweth](#) and [Amy Gonzales](#).

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