

# Cougar Women's Soccer Inks Seven on Signing Day

by Joe Pecoraro

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**EDWARDSVILLE** - SIUE women's soccer Head Coach [Derek Burton](#) announced the addition of seven student-athletes who have signed National Letters of Intent to join the program in the 2022-23 academic year. Signing NLIs with the Cougars are Macie Begley (O'Fallon, Mo.), Savannah DeFini (Gretna, Neb.), Sydney Lane (Edwardsville), Aleah Minehart (Kalamazoo, Mich.), Allie Fishering (Lake St. Louis, Mo.), Abby Haskell (Naperville, Ill.), and Taryn Moore (Wildwood, Mo.).

"The 2022 class is an exciting group of players," said Burton. "This is a diverse group with high level youth experience and a ton of quality coaching through their formative years. We're excited about the variety of playing characteristics this class brings with it, across all positions. This group had real challenges pursuing their college soccer dreams - through a pandemic and a mandatory Dead Period, through stretches of time that are usually critical in being recruited. I think it's a glimpse into who they are as people that they persevered, along with great parental support, to go after what they wanted in the next stage of their careers. That drive and ability to set goals and go after them is a foundation for success in our program."

## **Macie Begley**

**Hometown:** O'Fallon, Mo.

**High School:** Saint Dominic High School

**Position:** Midfield

**Club Team:** Saint Louis Scott Gallagher ECNL

**Coaches:** Ralph Richards, Shawn Hewitt, Greg Koeller, Edward Begley

**From Coach Burton:** Macie brings a real understanding to the center of the park. A good decision maker in possession, technically clean...a great foundation for impactful play in the middle of the field for us. Playing high level competition through the years has prepared her for the next level and has us excited for her to join us in 2022.

**Why I chose SIUE:** I chose SIUE because im excited to continue my soccer career at an outstanding program and receive an outstanding education. I am close enough to home to see my family, the campus was super inviting and made me feel at home. All the girls on the team were super welcoming and very supportive! I am so excited to join this amazing soccer program. I wanted to say thank you to all my coaches who have helped me along the way, special shout out to my Dad who coached me for most of my life.

## **Savannah DeFini**

**Hometown:** Gretna, Neb.

**High School:** Gretna High School

**Position:** Forward

**Club Team:** Gretna Elite Academy ECNL

**Coaches:** Digger Hawkins, Keith DeFini, Mitch Kavanagh

**From Coach Burton:** Savannah will not be outworked. Her approach to the game and her physical tools has her ready to be a college player. She can impact us in a couple of ways upfront, which is an aspect we really like about her and how she projects in our team. We look forward to her arrival to campus this summer.

**Why I chose SIUE:** I chose SIUE, because I fell in love with it immediately. The campus was absolutely beautiful, with lots of trees and bike paths. The coaches are genuine human beings, who love their players, and want the best for them. Lastly, talking with former, current, and future players, sealed the deal for me. SIUE is my dream school, and I can't wait to play for the Cougars!

## **Sydney Lane**

**Hometown:** Edwardsville, Ill.

**High School:** Edwardsville High School

**Position:** Midfield / Defense

**Club Team:** Saint Louis Scott Gallagher ECNL

**Coaches:** Jeff Besserman, Laura Heffington, Abby Federmann, and Shawn Hewitt

**From Coach Burton:** Syd brings a high soccer intelligence with her and can impact us in the middle of the field. Whether she's at center back or in the midfield, she has a high

level read of the game and is a player that makes good decisions with the ball. She can be an effective pivot player and we're looking forward to her ability to help us get possession of the ball and get the ball moving as well.

**Why I chose SIUE:** I chose SIUE because I felt like I fit in immediately with the friendly coaches and players. I am especially fortunate to be playing college soccer at a beautiful campus in my hometown and have my family cheer us on. Most importantly, I'm excited to see where my athletic and academic journey leads me. Roll Cougars!

### **Aleah Minehart**

**Hometown:** Kalamazoo, Mich.

**High School:** Gull Lake High School

**Position:** Midfield / Forward

**Club Team:** Midwest United ECNL

**Club Coaches:** Tony Deakin, Lewis Robinson, Scott Minehart

**From Coach Burton:** Adding another player with clean technical ability and a high-level soccer brain to the attack is exciting for us. Aleah has the quickness to cause real problems for defenders on her own and will fit in nicely with our other attacking players in terms of combining going forward. Versatility is another great asset as I can see her developing in a few different spots in the attack.

**Why I chose SIUE:** I chose SIUE because it checked all of my boxes. It had the program I want to major in and the program is highly rated. The campus is beautiful and the town of Edwardsville makes me feel at home. I also chose SIUE for its amazing soccer program and its amazing coaching staff. As soon as I stepped out onto Ralph Korte Stadium, it felt like home and I knew right away this was the family I wanted to join.

### **Allie Fishering**

**Hometown:** Lake Saint Louis, Mo.

**High School:** Incarnate Word Academy

**Position:** Defense

**Club Team:** Saint Louis Scott Gallagher

**Coaches:** Tony Kuster, Erik Kuster, Sean Kuster, John Neimi, Alex Baer, Jeff Muhr

**From Coach Burton:** Allie is a skilled, technically proficient defender with exceptional passing range and a very good read of the game going on around her. She is a determined 1v1 defender and has a real competitive desire for team success which we loved. We couldn't be any more thrilled to be welcoming Allie into the team in 2022

**Why I chose SIUE:** When I visited SIUE, it felt like home. After meeting the coaching staff and players, seeing the campus and soccer facility, and learning about the academic offerings, selecting SIUE was an easy decision for me. This school offers everything I want in my college experience, and I look forward to being a part of a team that demonstrates their commitment to a winning tradition.

## **Abby Haskell**

**Hometown:** Naperville, Ill.

**High School:** Naperville North High School

**Position:** Goalkeeper

**Club Team:** Evolution Soccer Club

**Coaches:** Noah Jawdat, Kieren Keane, Steven Goletz, Jim Konrad

**From Coach Burton:** Abby's athleticism, coupled with a very bright and mature personality, will be a great addition to our goalkeeper position. In a short time it was obvious that Abby has the drive and ability to handle big moments on the field. We look forward to Abby joining us this coming season.

**Why I chose SIUE:** I chose SIUE because the coaching staff is accepting and passionate about their players as both people and athletes. Also, when first visiting the campus it felt like home. The competitive soccer atmosphere at SIUE is the perfect fit for me. I am so excited to finally be a Cougar!

## **Taryn Moore**

**Hometown:** Wildwood, Mo.

**High School:** Marquette High School

**Position:** Midfield

**Club Team:** Lou Fusz Academy

**Coaches:** Chris Kenny

**From Coach Burton:** Taryn is a quality midfielder with creativity and high-level ability with the ball at her feet. We're looking forward to adding her vision and penchant for unlocking a defense with a final pass and subtle touches that help escape pressure to keep the ball with the team. She will be a great complement to the players around her and we're excited to have her joining us next season.

**Why I chose SIUE:** I chose SIUE because the coaching staff and players made me feel at home. When I attended camp, everyone was so welcoming I knew I made the right decision. The campus is beautiful and close to home which I like. Being able to be part of the great soccer program at SIUE is a truly incredible feeling for me.

"As always, we will be working to continue honoring SIUE with our performance and representing Cougar Nation to the highest degree possible in everything we do, including bringing home that next championship," closed Burton. "Our staff and team welcome the newest members of our program with open arms"