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# Chandler Young Signs to Play Baseball at Freed-Hardeman

MAY 12TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Chandler Young Signs to Play Baseball at Freed-Hardeman

**Dexter, Missouri** - Chandler Young became the latest in his family to sign a national letter of intent to play baseball at the college level. His older brother Chase, a 2013 Dexter graduate, is currently competing on the baseball diamond at Freed-Hardeman University. Chandler will join him in the fall.

"It is awesome," Chandler Young said. "it is something you kind of strive for whenever you are a kid. My brother Chase signed when I was a freshman. I saw him sign and knew at that moment I really wanted to compete at the college level and see how I could perform."

"My dad has coached baseball and has been very successful at it," continued Young. "I have also seen my older brother achieve on the field. It is the sport I have seen my family have success with growing up and I have always felt like the baseball diamond is where I can be very successful."

Longtime head baseball coach Brian Becker has had both brothers on his varsity squad. "Anytime one of your players signs a letter of intent to go to college you are always proud of them," commented Becker. "I am extremely proud of Chandler. He is a kid that has put in a lot of hard work and deserves to reap the benefits of that."

Becker recalled Chandler's ability to deliver at the plate under pressure since his very first high school at-bat. "His first varsity at-bat I had the bunt sign on and he missed a bunt,"

Becker said. "He had two strikes on him so I called him down to the third base coaching box and said, 'You better find a way to get on base.' and he got a base hit.

Young has served many positions on the field. He has been extremely versatile as a corner infielder, outfielder and a pitcher. He hopes to keep his options open as he heads off to college.

"It is kind of undecided right now," Young said. "I am looking to play a corner infield or outfield position. But I would also be interested in pitching as well and haven't ruled that out."

Coach Becker thinks hitting could be Young's best asset at the college level. "I would say in college he would probably be a better hitter than anything because he has got a really good stroke at the plate and I think he will do well down there."

Freed-Hardeman is an NAIA school that competes in the American Midwest Conference in baseball.

"It is a great place," stated Young. "It is a Christian college and it is a small college so class sizes are smaller and education is a big factor for me. They also have a winning program that is currently ranked nationally. They are second in their conference right now and hopefully they can build on that in their tournament. It is a successful program as well that offers good academics."

Young plans to major in Psychology and minor in Business at Freed-Hardeman. "I hope to open my own practice, contract out to people, obtain customers and build a business."

**Shown in the photo seated are from left to right Christine Young, Chandler Young, Marty Young. Standing from left to right are Cody Boyer, Derek Urhahn, and Brian Becker.**

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## Brittany Brown Signs to Play Volleyball at Crowley's Ridge College

MAY 12TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Brittany Brown Signs to Play Volleyball at Crowley's Ridge College

**Dexter, Missouri** - Dexter High School senior Brittany Brown signed her letter of intent to play volleyball at Crowley's Ridge College in Paragould, Arkansas and will have the opportunity to rejoin her sister Ashley Brown on the court next season.

"I am very excited," stated Brown. "It is going to be more challenging, just like transitioning from middle school to high school volleyball, It is just another step."

Brittany's sister Ashley is currently a setter in volleyball at Crowley's Ridge. Head volleyball coach Barry Wheeler is excited to land both girls on his team.

"Brittany is a great player and I am very excited to have her come and play for us," Wheeler said. "With her sister being there it helped quite a bit getting her to come here. She will have a shot to start right off the bat as a defensive specialist for us. We are banking on her being able to play right away. She can get to a lot of balls that kids cannot get to and it is fun watching her."

Brittany has played the position of libero most of her high school career under the leadership of Coach Carmen Morgan. She has also enjoyed a fair share of success her senior year winning the SCAA Tournament and SCAA regular season titles for a third straight year. She was also selected SCAA Co-Defensive Player of the Year.

"I am really excited for her and the program," stated Dexter head volleyball coach Carmen Morgan. "Brittany is a tenacious player. She gives effort every day, even in practice games. She is a go-getter that never complains. She is the kind of player you love to coach."

"Defense is a game within a game," continued Morgan. "It is a state of mind. Brittany has that defensive state of mind. She will step in there and never let a ball get past her. She is quick and agile."

Morgan said that Brittany displayed her defensive abilities time after time in a drill called 21 in their regular volleyball practices. "We have a drill that we do called 21 where you have to touch 21 balls thrown/rolled to you," said Morgan. "The balls are rolled everywhere fast and slow. It is all about foot speed and they have to touch them before the balls roll out of bounds. Brittany would always go last and she would always get every ball. She would touch every one without me throwing an extra ball and she would get every ball."

Brittany said her most memorable moment on the volleyball court was winning a District Title in 2014. "Now that was really cool!"

Crowley's Ridge College competes in the National Christian College Athletic Association in women's basketball, volleyball, and softball. It is a four year college.

Wheeler is enter his first season as head volleyball coach at Crowley's Ridge. he served as head coach at Houston High School before coming to CRC.

"I am bringing in 12 freshmen with three returning players off of last season's squad. These 15 players will be the most they have ever had on a team and I was able to bring in five players from the area in Missouri where I came from," stated Wheeler.

"They only had 7 players last year, but managed to qualify for regionals and that is a pretty big deal with only seven kids."

Brittany said she is unsure about a major, but is considering a degree in the medical field, perhaps nursing like her mom.

"I may want to do something with nursing, maybe," Brown said. "My mom is a nurse and Ashley is wanting to be a nurse, maybe I will follow in their footsteps."

**Shown in the photo are seated from left to right: Regina Brown, Brittany Brown, and Johnny Brown. Standing from left to right are Barry Wheeler, Joyce Kitchens, Ashley Brown, Bill Kitchens, and Carmen Morgan.**

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## McKuin and Reynolds Sign to Play at Williams Baptist

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MAY 12TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[McKuin and Reynolds Sign to Play at Williams Baptist](#)

**Dexter, Missouri** - Seniors Melanie McKuin and Dakota Reynolds will have the opportunity to continue working on the basketball court next season. Both signed a letter of intent to play at Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas.

"It feels pretty good," commented Reynolds. "I know that I will know someone. We have been playing since the third grade together and we know how to play together on the court. We should be able to work well down there."

"When we were in the fifth grade, we were playing a high school in AAU ball," continued Reynolds. "She passed the ball to me and I shot it for the win, and we won by one point against a high school team as fifth graders!"

Melanie McKuIn also recalled a memorable moment of her high school basketball career when she ran offensive sets in a clutch situation with Reynolds.

"There are always those big time games when Dakota and I work best," stated McKuIn. "I dribble-penetrated and hit her for a three and it just goes in! That's one of the best things, us working together and getting points for the team. That's been my favorite thing!"

Melanie and Dakota were very impressed with the campus atmosphere at Williams Baptist College and head girls basketball coach Carol Halford was happy to sign the both of them.

"It certainly is a bonus to get two in one day," Halford said. "That's rare. I was thinking back and I think maybe one other time in my 33 years I have been at Williams Baptist I have had a double signing. I signed a couple of kids out of the Little Rock area one time, but that is the only other double signing I can recall."

When asked about the college atmosphere, Reynolds said, "When I went to visit it was a very pretty campus and the people were very welcoming. The coaches were great and there are some great people down there. It is not too far away and I just fell in love with it."

"I just wanted to continue to play basketball and develop my skills some more. It felt like a place where I was supposed to be. It just kind of clicked with me," McKuIn added about their visit.

The girls have had quite a bit of success at Dexter High School. The Lady Cats won four District Titles, advanced to two CoMo Final Fours and compiled a varsity record of 93-25 in their four years at Dexter High School under Coach Chad Allen.

Melanie McKuIn has had the opportunity to play all five positions for the Lady Cats. This year as a senior she experienced playing at center after a teammate suffered an injury and was out for the season.

"Playing the five spot this year was a really big challenge for me," McKuIn said. "Now I have played every position in basketball, which has improved my game overall."

Dakota Reynolds has primarily played point guard most of her high school career.

Both ladies exhibit skills that made them attractive recruits Halford said of the two seniors. "I like McKuin's length. She will continue to get better and better at the next level," continued Halford. "She will probably develop more core body strength and add a little more weight possibly. I also like her athleticism, the way she runs the floor and her ability to defend several different positions.

"We like Dakota's speed, quickness, ball-handling, ability to shoot the three-ball and the way she can see the court and find people in the corner," stated Halford.

Both ladies have already had experience playing against elite talent in the United States. They have been members of the Hoopsters Basketball Academy for the last four years. The Hoopsters Basketball Academy is comprised of excellent and talented players from Missouri, Arkansas, and Tennessee who compete in tournaments throughout the Midwest over the summer months.

"In our traveling ball we play against college-level competition," commented Hoopsters Basketball Academy head coach Spencer Hoffman. "That's what the kids that do the traveling ball want to experience. When we do these exposure events, it gives our players a barometer of what they need to improve on and where they fit in against college-level talent."

"Both of these girls are extremely hard workers," Hoffman said. "Williams Baptist is getting two really good basketball players, but more importantly they are adding two quality kids and two quality families to their program. They are going to be an attribute to whatever they are involved with at Williams."

Williams Baptist College is a four-year Christian liberal arts college and is known for its academic excellence and personal attention. Student-to-teacher ratio is 13 to 1 with over 500 students attending the main campus. They compete in the American Midwest Conference in women's basketball.

"It is a small liberal arts college that is pretty family-oriented," Halford said. "We have small classrooms and people know you by name. I think both of these ladies felt comfortable with that situation. at the same time, it is academically challenging. We have got between 25 to 30 degree programs right now. it is also very competitive as far as athletics."

McKuin said she wanted to work towards becoming a pharmacist, while Reynolds said she wanted to work towards a degree in sports medicine.

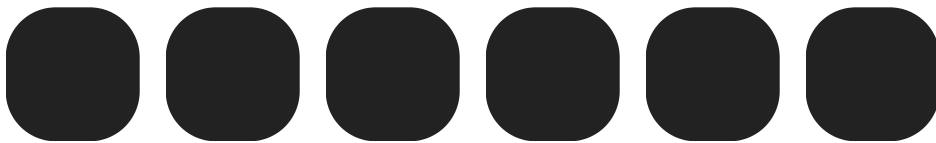
"I want to go into pre-pharmacy and continue on to pharmacy school," stated McKuin. "I have always had an interest in medicine. When I was in middle school, my cousin was a pharmacist, and I was able to shadow her and I loved what she did and decided that is what I want to do when I grow up!"

"I love sports so much and want to stay involved with it," Reynolds said. "I know how injuries are and I want to help other people out with them."

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## Coach Goltra Prepares for the 2016 Bearcat Football Season

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MAY 11TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN



## Coach Goltra Preparing for the 2016 Bearcat Football Season

**Dexter, Missouri** - Coach Kevin Goltra presented his training schedule for June, July and August to a packed auditorium at the Dexter High School. It was an opportunity to meet and discuss the upcoming football season with parents and students.

"The main reason we are here is to know what's going on," Goltra said to a large group of parents and athletes.

"We have got to get in the weight room now. I expect each football player to be in the weight room 3 sessions a week and I will be taking roll," Goltra said. "I feel like we are already behind somewhat and I want to do all I can this summer to get our athletes in shape!"

Beginning May 31st Summer Weights will begin with the weight room being open three to four days per week with several times available each day. On June 6th we will practice from 7 a.m. - 11 a.m. and that gives us about 2 1/2 hours of practice with a 30 minute cool down. "If you miss a practice you will be so far behind," Goltra commented. "So it will good for you to be there that week."

Goltra told the audience that he plans to take athletes to the SEMO Practice Camp which begins on Monday, June 20th - Thursday June 23rd. The athletes will stay in the dorms at Southeast Missouri State University while they attend Practice Camp.

"It will be a good experience for them. I call it "Hell Week" like for the Navy Seals. It is a very tough, tough 3 days of practice. It will be extremely difficult, but 20 years from now you will all be talking about it. It is a great opportunity to practice offense and defense," commented Goltra. "They will get a good work-out before coming back on Thursday and having the Dexter 7 on 7 and Lineman Challenge on that Saturday. I want them to rest on Friday."

Goltra handed out a practice schedule to anyone who wanted one at the meeting. On July 11th evening practices begin from 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. Monday - Thursday. On July 18th the football team will practice with helmets for two days in the morning from 7 a.m. - 11 a.m. before the team leaves for Buffalo Camp on Wednesday. Not all players will be required to attend this two day camp, but most will. It will be depend on where they are in their training development.

Dead Period is Saturday, July 23rd - Sunday July 31st which is a great time to take vacations if you can schedule them. Goltra explained that he will work with any parent or business in town to work around schedules for vacations or work, but you have to be open

and forthcoming. If you don't show up to practice you won't play, but if you let him know in advance then something can be worked out!

"Communication is the key and everyone will have my cell phone number," Goltra said. "I know everyone has vacations planned all through out the year and I will work with you as long as you come to me and let me know."

Football practices will be held in the evenings from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. or sometimes 3:30 p.m. - 6 p.m. in August since that is the hottest month of the year in southeast Missouri.

Coach Goltra is a firm believer in two or even three sport athletes and he has already reached out to Coach Dowdy, Dexter's head basketball coach, to make sure the scheduled for basketball practice and Rib City to not conflict this summer with his practices. He really wants students to be able to play multiple sports and be well rounded athletes.

The Jamboree is slated to be played at Dexter on Friday, August 12th at 7:00 p.m. Details will be forthcoming in the near future. Season opener will be at Ste. Genevieve on Friday, August 19th at 7:00 p.m. for the varsity Bearcats.

"We do have an opening right now, but are diligently working on finding a school that will play us that's not too far away and not a 5A type school," commented Goltra after a parent asked about the September 9th open date. The Charleston Bluejays dropped Dexter from their schedule.

The Junior Varsity Bearcats will have their season opener at Malden on Monday, August 22nd at 6:00 p.m.

"I will be here May 31st and ready to get to work," stated Goltra. "I honestly can't wait to get started and see where we are and what we can accomplish this year. I have already met some good people in Dexter and the support has been great!"

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## Day with the Baseball Bearcats

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MAY 07TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Day with the Baseball Bearcats

**Dexter, Missouri** - Saturday, May 7th Day with the Bearcats! Students K – 6thgrade will have an opportunity to spend the afternoon from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. with the Dexter Bearcat Baseball team and training staff while learning fundamentals and practicing with the team.

The cost is \$20 per athlete and they will receive a special T-shirt. This event is sponsored by the Dexter Bullpen Club and is a fundraiser for the baseball team and upgrades needed for the field.

The Dexter High School Baseball Field is located at East Park near the swimming pool in Dexter.

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