



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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For Immediate Release

February 7, 2018

SDSU Football Head Coach Rocky Long Announces 2018 Signing Class *Aztecs add seven more players to finish 24-member class*

SAN DIEGO -- San Diego State head football coach Rocky Long announced the signing Wednesday of seven more players to National Letters of Intent or Offers of Aid. Including the 17 that signed in the first-ever class during the early signing period from Dec. 20-22, a total of 24 athletes will join the Aztecs for the 2018 season.

SDSU's signing class now includes 11 on offense, 11 on defense, one athlete and one kicker/punter. The 24-member class also features 14 from the state of California, three from Nevada, two from New Mexico and Texas, and one apiece from Arizona, Hawaii and the country of Canada. Additionally, 21 are high schoolers and three are college transfers.

The seven new additions to the class today include three on offense - running back Zidane Thomas (Peoria, Ariz./Centennial HS), wide receiver Kobe Smith (Compton, Calif./Junipero Serra HS) and offensive lineman Alama Uluave (Laie, Hawaii/Punahou HS) - three on defense - defensive linemen Jalil Lecky (Antioch, Calif./Heritage HS/College of San Mateo) and Joah Robinett (San Diego/San Marcos HS/Oregon State), and defensive back Luqman Barcoo (Chula Vista, Calif./Castle Park HS/Grossmont College) - and one athlete in Denaylan Fuimaono (Long Beach, Calif./Carson HS).

A full list of the signees is below.

SDSU finished 2017 with a 10-3 record, its school-record third consecutive year with at least 10 victories. San Diego State is scheduled to return seven starters on offense and seven on defense, along with its kicker and punter. The Aztecs kick off the 2018 campaign Aug. 31 at Stanford.

Name	Position	HT/WT	Fall '18 Class	Hometown (High School/Previous School)
*Andrew Alves	Linebacker	6-2/225	Freshman	San Diego, Calif. (St. Augustine HS)
*Matt Araiza	Kicker/Punter	6-2/185	Freshman	Rancho Bernardo, Calif. (Rancho Bernardo HS)
*Carson Baker	Quarterback	6-3/190	Freshman	San Diego, Calif. (Helix HS)
*Keshawn Banks	Defensive Line	6-4/260	Freshman	Rio Rancho, N.M. (Rio Rancho HS)
Luqman Barcoo	Defensive Back	6-1/170	Junior	Chula Vista, Calif. (Castle Park HS/Grossmont College)
*Cedarious Barfield	Defensive Back	5-11/175	Freshman	El Paso, Texas (El Dorado HS)

Name	Position	HT/WT	Fall '18 Class	Hometown (High School/Previous School)
*Daniel Bellinger	Tight End	6-6/220	Freshman	Las Vegas, Nev. (Palo Verde HS)
*Josh Bornes	Linebacker	6-0/200	Freshman	San Marcos, Calif. (San Marcos HS)
*Jordan Byrd	Running Back	5-9/175	Freshman	Albuquerque, N.M. (Manzano HS)
*William Dunkle	Offensive Line	6-5/355	Freshman	Chula Vista, Calif. (Eastlake HS)
Denaylan Fuimaono	Athlete	6-0/190	Freshman	Long Beach, Calif. (Carson HS)
*JR Justice	Wide Receiver	6-3/200	Freshman	San Diego, Calif. (St. Augustine HS)
*Elijah Kothe	Wide Receiver	6-4/185	Freshman	Las Vegas, Nev. (Faith Lutheran HS)
Jalil Lecky	Defensive Line	6-5/215	Junior	Antioch, Calif. (Heritage HS/College of San Mateo)
*Nic McTear	Tight End	6-5/220	Freshman	Frisco, Texas (Heritage HS)
*Allan Mwata	Defensive Back	6-0/180	Freshman	Las Vegas, Nev. (Liberty HS)
*Daniel Okpoko	Defensive Line	6-5/235	Freshman	Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada (St. Joseph's HS)
Joah Robinett	Defensive Line	6-8/260	Sophomore	San Diego, Calif. (San Marcos HS/Oregon State)
*Rashad Scott	Defensive Back	6-2/180	Freshman	San Diego, Calif. (Helix HS)
Kobe Smith	Wide Receiver	6-2/175	Freshman	Compton, Calif. (Junipero Serra HS)
*TJ Sullivan	Wide Receiver	6-0/180	Freshman	San Diego, Calif. (Mt. Carmel HS)
*Cameron Thomas	Defensive Line	6-5/235	Freshman	Carlsbad, Calif. (Carlsbad HS)
Zidane Thomas	Running Back	5-11/210	Freshman	Peoria, Ariz. (Centennial HS)
Alama Uluave	Offensive Line	6-2/315	Freshman	Laie, Hawaii (Punahou HS)

* Signed Dec. 20 for Early National Signing day

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2018 Football Class

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Name	Position	Height	Weight	Fall '18 Class	Hometown (High School/Previous School)
*Andrew Alves	Linebacker	6-2	225	Freshman	San Diego, Calif. (St. Augustine High)
*Matt Araiza	Kicker/Punter	6-2	185	Freshman	Rancho Bernardo, Calif. (Rancho Bernardo High)
*Carson Baker	Quarterback	6-3	190	Freshman	San Diego, Calif. (Helix High)
*Keshawn Banks	Defensive Line	6-4	260	Freshman	Rio Rancho, N.M. (Rio Rancho High)
Luqman Barcoo	Defensive Back	6-1	170	Junior	Chula Vista, Calif. (Castle Park High/Grossmont College)
*Cedarius Barfield	Defensive Back	5-11	175	Freshman	El Paso, Texas (El Dorado High)
*Daniel Bellinger	Tight End	6-6	220	Freshman	Las Vegas, Nev. (Palo Verde High)
*Josh Bornes	Linebacker	6-0	200	Freshman	San Marcos, Calif. (San Marcos High)
*Jordan Byrd	Running Back	5-9	175	Freshman	Albuquerque, N.M. (Manzano High)
*William Dunkle	Offensive Line	6-5	355	Freshman	Chula Vista, Calif. (Eastlake High)
Denaylan Fuimaono	Athlete	6-0	190	Freshman	Long Beach, Calif. (Carson High)
*JR Justice	Wide Receiver	6-3	200	Freshman	San Diego, Calif. (St. Augustine High)
*Elijah Kothe	Wide Receiver	6-4	185	Freshman	Las Vegas, Nev. (Faith Lutheran High)
Jalil Lecky	Defensive Line	6-5	215	Junior	Antioch, Calif. (Heritage High/College of San Mateo)
*Nic McTear	Tight End	6-5	220	Freshman	Frisco, Texas (Heritage High)
*Allan Mwata	Defensive Back	6-0	180	Freshman	Las Vegas, Nev. (Liberty High)
*Daniel Okpoko	Defensive Line	6-5	235	Freshman	Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada (St. Joseph's High)
Joah Robinett	Defensive Line	6-8	260	Sophomore	San Diego, Calif. (San Marcos High/Oregon State)
*Rashad Scott	Defensive Back	6-2	180	Freshman	San Diego, Calif. (Helix High)
Kobe Smith	Wide Receiver	6-2	175	Freshman	Compton, Calif. (Junipero Serra High)
*TJ Sullivan	Wide Receiver	6-0	180	Freshman	San Diego, Calif. (Mt. Carmel High)
*Cameron Thomas	Defensive Line	6-5	235	Freshman	Carlsbad, Calif. (Carlsbad High)
Zidane Thomas	Running Back	5-11	210	Freshman	Peoria, Ariz. (Centennial High)
Alama Uluave	Offensive Line	6-2	315	Freshman	Laie, Hawaii (Punahou High)

* Signed Dec. 20 for Early National Signing day



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2018 Football Signees

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■ Andrew Alves

Linebacker

6-2, 225

San Diego, Calif. (St. Augustine High)

Local product out of St. Augustine High School in San Diego, the same high school as incoming recruit JR Justice and current Aztec true freshman Tariq Thompson, who was named a USA Today Freshman All-American and a second-team all-Mountain West pick ... Earned four letters with the Saints, helping them to a 35-15 (.700) record since 2014 ... According to MaxPreps, totaled 265 tackles (179 solo), including 28 tackles for loss, 24.5 sacks, nine pass deflections, two forced fumbles and five fumble recoveries ... Is coming off a 2017 season with 100 tackles (69 solo), 12 tackles for loss, 3.5 sacks and two fumble recoveries ... Also had two career touchdown catches as a fullback ... A three-year all-league selection and two-time all-CIF pick ... A scholar-athlete ... Was a two-year captain for the Saints and a team MVP ... A two-star recruit by both Rivals and 247sports ... Picked the Aztecs over official offers from Army West Point, Navy and Air Force, according to Rivals.

■ Matt Araiza

Kicker/Punter

6-2, 185

Rancho Bernardo, Calif. (Rancho Bernardo High)

Kicked and punted for three years at local Rancho Bernardo High School in Rancho Bernardo, Calif. ... According to MaxPreps, connected on 37 of his 48 field goal attempts for his career with a long of 53 yards ... Also averaged 41.7 yards per punt (120 punts for 5,001 yards) with a long of 71 yards ... Out of 221 kickoffs, 179 went for touchbacks ... Had a solid senior campaign in 2017, making 12 of his 16 field goal attempts with a long of 53 yards, while punting 39 times for 1,712 yards (43.9 avg.) and finishing with touchbacks on 49 of his 51 kickoffs ... Also played some time as a defensive back ... His 37 field goals were a San Diego Section record, breaking former Aztec Nate Tandberg's 34, set from 1993-95 at the same Rancho Bernardo HS ... Was a MaxPreps Sophomore First-Team All-American and a first-team California Medium Schools pick ... A three-time all-CIF San Diego Section Kicker of the Year and two-time Palomar League Kicker of the Year ... A two-star recruit by 247sports and the 19th-best kicker by the outlet ... Also competed in soccer and track and field at RBHS ... Also received scholarship offers from Massachusetts and Montana.

■ Carson Baker

Quarterback

6-3, 190

San Diego, Calif. (Helix High)

Played three seasons at nearby Helix High School in La Mesa, the same high school as incoming recruit Rashad Scott ... Helped the Highlanders to a 34-7 (.829) record over the three years, including a state championship appearance and 13-2 record in 2017 ... According to MaxPreps, was 368-for-546 (67.3 pct.) for 5,544 yards, throwing for 62 touchdowns against just eight interceptions ... Also ran 129 times for 590 yards and an additional seven scores ... Had a tremendous senior season in 2017, completing 162 of 235 attempts (68.9 pct.) for 33 touchdowns with just three interceptions, while rushing for 316 yards and four touchdowns ... Also plays basketball at Helix High School ... Picked the Aztecs over official offers from UC Davis, Columbia, Dartmouth and San Diego, according to Rivals.

■ Keshawn Banks

Defensive Line

6-4, 260

Rio Rancho, N.M. (Rio Rancho High)

Three-year letterwinner at Rio Rancho High School in Rio Rancho, N.M., in the Albuquerque area ... Led the Rams to a 13-0 record and state championship in 2016, and a 9-3 mark in 2017 ... Had 133 tackles over this three years according to MaxPreps, including 37 tackles for loss, 18 sacks, eight pass deflections, three forced fumbles, three fumble recoveries and an interception ... Registered 55 tackles, 20 TFL, 10 sacks, four pass deflections, a forced fumble and two recoveries last year ... Played in the North-South all-star game ... Earned all-state, all-metro and all-district accolades, and was named the metro defensive player of the year ... A three-star recruit by 247sports and a two-star recruit from Rivals ... Rated as the third-best recruit in New Mexico by 247sports ... Also lettered for three years with the basketball team and twice on the track and field squad ... Picked the Aztecs over Colorado State, Wyoming, UNLV, New Mexico and New Mexico State.



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■ Luqman Barcoo

Defensive Back

6-1, 170

Chula Vista, Calif. (Castle Park High/Grossmont College)

Played two years at nearby Grossmont College in El Cajon, Calif. ... Played on both sides of the ball ... Last year caught 35 passes for 767 yards (21.9 avg.) and seven touchdowns ... Recorded three interceptions in his two seasons with the Griffins ... Was an all-conference selection ... Garnered three letters at Castle Park High School in Chula Vista, Calif. ... Did a little bit of everything with the Trojans, rushing 57 times for 472 yards (8.4 avg.) and six touchdowns over his final two seasons (according to MaxPreps), and catching 71 passes for 1,314 yards (18.5 avg.) and 15 touchdowns ... On defense, totaled 74 tackles (52 solo), four tackles for loss, five interceptions, nine pass breakups and a blocked field goal ... A three-star recruit by Rivals ... Also was recruited by Utah State and Northern Arizona.

■ Cedarius Barfield

Defensive Back

5-11, 175

El Paso, Texas (El Dorado High)

A three-year letterwinner at El Dorado High School in El Paso, Texas ... Played on four district championship teams ... Played a bit of everything at El Dorado HS, including quarterback, wide receiver, cornerback, kick returner, punt returner and punter ... According to MaxPreps, was 369-for-602 (61.3 pct.) over his three seasons at quarterback for 59 touchdowns against just eight interceptions, while rushing for 3,760 yards and 58 touchdowns on 358 attempts (10.5 avg.) ... Threw for 2,220 yards and 23 touchdowns in 2017, and rushed for 1,668 yards and 28 touchdowns on 166 carries (10.0 avg.) ... In 2016 threw for 3,069 yards and 33 touchdowns, and rushed for 1,582 yards and 22 scores on 134 attempts (11.8 avg.) ... Was a second-team all-state selection, a two-time 6A MVP and the El Paso Times MVP ... A three-star recruit by both Rivals and 247sports ... Also lettered on the basketball team and track and field team ... Made the all-defensive team in basketball ... Was all-region choir and an all-academic pick in both football and basketball ... Chose San Diego State over offers from New Mexico, Southern Miss, UTEP, Air Force, Navy, Army West Point, New Mexico State and North Dakota.

■ Daniel Bellinger

Tight End

6-6, 220

Las Vegas, Nev. (Palo Verde High)

Earned three letters at Palo Verde High School in Las Vegas, Nev. ... Is coming off a successful 2017 season where he totaled 21 catches for 371 yards (17.7 avg.) and three touchdowns in nine games on offense, according to MaxPreps ... On defense as a linebacker, he finished with 131 tackles, 10 tackles for loss, three sacks, two forced fumbles and a fumble recovery ... His 131 tackles were the most

on PVHS and 84 more tackles than No. 2 on the team ... Racked up numerous awards, including a first-team all-league selection on both offense and defense, and an all-city (Las Vegas) honoree ... Is a two-star recruit at linebacker by Rivals and a two-star tight end by 247sports ... Rated as the 14th-best recruit in Nevada by 247sports ... Also starred in both basketball and track and field at Palo Verde HS, earning second-team all-league honors in basketball and making the regional finals in track and field in the 400 meters and 4x400-meter relay ... Was a scholar-athlete ... Picked SDSU over other offers from California, Navy, UNLV and Weber State.

■ Josh Bornes

Linebacker

6-0, 220

San Marcos, Calif. (San Marcos High)

Lettered three years at nearby San Marcos High School in San Marcos, Calif. ... Led the Knights to a 9-3 record in 2017 ... According to MaxPreps, amassed 284 tackles, 25 tackles for loss, 12.5 sacks, one forced fumble and three fumble recoveries ... Also accumulated 1,184 rushing yards on 221 attempts (5.4 avg.) with 19 touchdowns, and 44 catches for 450 yards (10.2 avg.) and five touchdown reception ... In 2017 had 114 tackles and 12 tackles for loss on defense, while rushing for 785 yards and 13 touchdowns on 128 carries (6.1 avg.), and adding 28 receptions for 302 yards (10.8 avg.) and four touchdown catches ... Was a first-team all-CIF selection in 2017, as well as a first-team all-Avocado League pick and the Avocado League Defensive Player of the Year ... Is a two-star recruit by Rivals as a linebacker and a two-star recruit by 247sports as an athlete ... According to Rivals, also received offers from Hawai'i and San Jose State ... Also competes on the track and field team at San Marcos HS ... Older brother, Brandon, rushed for 1,553 yards and 13 touchdowns from 2004-07.

■ Jordan Byrd

Running Back

5-9, 175

Albuquerque, N.M. (Manzano High)

Was a three-year letterwinner at Manzano High School in Albuquerque, N.M. ... Led the Monarchs to a state championship in 2017 and perfect 13-0 record ... Manzano High School improved its record each of Byrd's three years, going from 7-5 in 2015, to 10-3 in 2016 to 13-0 in 2017 ... Played quarterback, running back and wide receiver at MHS, and also returned kicks and punts ... Over his three years (according to MaxPreps), was 112-for-177 (63.3 pct.) for 1,522 yards and 16 touchdowns against four interceptions, while rushing 344 times for 2,750 yards (8.0 avg.) and 37 touchdowns, and adding 41 catches for 669 yards (16.3 avg.) and four touchdowns ... Best season statistically was 2017, where he was 72-for-107 (67.4 pct.) for 1,011 yards and 10 touchdowns in the air, 1,235 yards and 21 touchdowns on the ground on 158 carries (7.8 avg.), and adding 25 catches for 381 yards (15.2 avg.) and three touchdowns ... Earned all-state and all-metro honors, and was the league MVP ... Was a three-time team MVP ... As an athlete, earned three stars from 247sports and two stars from Rivals ... Rated as the top recruit in New Mexico by 247sports ... Also competed on the track and field team



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... Twice earned the student of the month ... According to Rivals, also had scholarship offers from TCU, Arizona, Utah, Texas Tech, Utah State and New Mexico.

■ William Dunkle

Offensive Line

6-5, 355

Chula Vista, Calif. (Eastlake High)

A three-year letterwinner and two-time captain at nearby Eastlake High School in Chula Vista, Calif. ... Led the Titans to a 10-3 record in 2017 after finishing just 2-9 the previous year ... Team was the runner-up at CIFs in 2017 ... Was a three-time all-league selection and all-CIF ... Also was a three-star offensive lineman ... Was a three-star recruit by 247sports and a two-star recruit by Rivals ... According to Rivals, also received scholarship offers from UCF, Fresno State, Colorado State, Utah State, Illinois, UNLV, UTEP and South Dakota ... Nephew of Freddie Dunkle, who played at San Diego State from 2004-07.

■ Denaylan Fuimaono

Athlete

6-0, 190

Long Beach, Calif. (Carson High)

Lettered one year at Carson High School in Carson, Calif., after playing previously at Cabrillo High School in Long Beach, Calif. ... Led Carson HS to an appearance in the semifinals ... In just five games at Carson HS, (according to MaxPreps), rushed for 193 yards and four touchdowns on 18 carries (10.7 avg.) and had two interceptions on defense ... At Cabrillo HS, best year was his junior season in 2016 when he was 104-for-201 (51.7 pct.) for 1,139 yards and 11 touchdowns (according to MaxPreps), while rushing for 999 yards and 16 touchdowns on 90 carries (11.1 avg.) on offense and 41 tackles and two interceptions on defense ... Is a three-star recruit at safety by 247sports and a two-star recruit by Rivals ... Was a honor roll student ... Also played rugby and volleyball ... According to Rivals, picked the Aztecs over offers from Washington State, Army West Point, Navy, Utah State, Air Force, Nevada, New Mexico, Hawai'i, San Jose State and UC Davis.

■ JR Justice

Wide Receiver

6-3, 300

San Diego, Calif. (St. Augustine High)

Joins linebacker Andrew Alves as a signee from St. Augustine High School in San Diego, the same high school as current Aztec true freshman Tariq Thompson, who was named a USA Today Freshman All-American and a second-team all-Mountain West pick ... Played the last four years with the Saints, where they went 35-15 (.700) over his time there ... Saw time as a wide receiver and quarterback on offense, at cornerback on defense, and at punter, punt returner and occasionally kick returner on special teams ... According to MaxPreps, totaled 82 catches for

1,419 yards (17.3 avg.) and 18 touchdowns and 20 carries for 133 yards (6.7 avg.), while completing 11 of 20 attempts for 215 yards and three touchdowns ... Played in six games in 2017 with 28 catches for 398 yards (14.2 avg.) and six touchdowns, a year after making 46 catches for 932 yards (20.3 avg.) and 12 scores as a junior in 2016 ... Averaged 35.0 yards per punt over his career with a long of 61 yards ... A consensus three-star recruit - at athlete by Rivals and 247sports, and a wide receiver by ESPN ... Rated as the 53rd-best athlete by 247sports ... According to Rivals, picked San Diego State over offers from USC, Louisville, Tennessee, Virginia Tech, Boise State, Fresno State, Arizona, Boston College, Colorado State, Utah State, Indiana, Illinois, Nevada, Hawai'i, Brown, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton and Yale ... Is the son of three-time Major League Baseball all-star David Justice.

■ Elijah Kothe

Wide Receiver

6-4, 185

Las Vegas, Nev. (Faith Lutheran High)

Earned four letters at Faith Lutheran High School in Las Vegas, Nev. ... According to MaxPreps, registered 115 catches over the last three seasons for 1,806 yards (15.7 avg.) and 19 touchdowns ... Best year statistically was his junior campaign in 2016 when he had 55 catches for 1,053 yards (19.1 avg.) and 10 touchdowns ... Was a two-time all-state selection and a three-time all-league performer ... A two-star recruit by both Rivals and 247sports ... Rated as the 13th-best recruit in Nevada by 247sports ... Also a four-year letterwinner in basketball, twice earning all-league accolades ... A scholar-athlete who is a three-time academic all-state selection, posting a 4.0 GPA ... According to Rivals, picked the Aztecs over scholarship offers from Colorado, Fresno State, Navy, Air Force, UNLV, Hawai'i, Montana State, Northern Iowa, Cornell and Princeton.

■ Jalil Lecky

Defensive Line

6-5, 215

Antioch, Calif. (Heritage High/College of San Mateo)

Played two years at College of San Mateo ... Led the Bulldogs to an 18-5 (.783) record over the two seasons, including an 11-2 mark last year and spot in the California JuCo championship game ... Team was the NorCal champions and Bay 6 league champs ... Last year had 21 tackles (11 solo), three sacks, six tackles for loss, a forced fumble and a pass breakup ... Prior to CSM, earned two letters at Heritage High School in Brentwood, Calif. ... Also played basketball for the Patriots ... According to 247sports, also received offers from Arizona State, Arkansas State and Hawai'i.



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■ Nic McTear

Tight End

6-5, 220

Frisco, Texas (Heritage High)

Played three years at Heritage High School in Frisco, Texas ... Was a first-team all-district selection as a junior in 2016 ... A consensus three-star recruit by ESPN, Rivals and 247sports ... Ranked as the 15th-best tight end in the 2018 class by ESPN and 22nd by 247sports ... Earned a scout grade of 78 by ESPN ... According to Rivals, picked the Aztecs over offers from Auburn, Miami, LSU, Oklahoma State, Mississippi State, Colorado, Baylor, Houston, Toledo, Iowa State, Colorado State, North Texas, Tulsa and Louisiana-Monroe.

■ Allan Mwata

Defensive Back

6-0, 180

Las Vegas, Nev. (Liberty High)

A three-year letterwinner at Liberty High School in Las Vegas, Nev., the same school current true freshman wide receiver Ethan Dedeaux attended ... Led the Patriots to a 34-6 (.850) record over the three seasons, including back-to-back league titles in 2015 and 2016 ... Registered 110 tackles over the last three years (according to MaxPreps), with 11 interceptions for 247 yards and two touchdowns, and 21 pass deflections ... Was a two-time all-league selection and an all-state pick ... Named the team's defensive MVP ... A two-star recruit by both Rivals and 247sports ... Ranked as the 18th-best recruit in the state of Nevada by 247sports ... Picked San Diego State over other offers from Florida Atlantic, Brigham Young, UNLV and Northern Arizona.

■ Daniel Okpoko

Defensive Line

6-5, 235

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada (St. Joseph's High)

Played at St. Joseph's High School in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada ... Will join current true freshman Ladji Bagayoko (Saint-Laurent, Quebec) as Aztec players from Canada ... A member of the Football Canada U18 National team ... Had 8.5 sacks during the 2016 season at St. Joseph's HS ... Was originally considering signing with North Dakota ... Also competed on the track and field team at St. Joseph's HS.

■ Joah Robinett

Defensive Line

6-8, 260

San Diego, Calif. (San Marcos High/Oregon State)

Played in two games at Oregon State in 2016 as a true freshman, starting both games ... Recorded five tackles in his debut against California, before suffering a season-ending shoulder injury in his second game vs. Utah ... Prior to signing with OSU out of high school in 2016, played at nearby San Marcos High School in San Marcos, Calif. ... Led the Knights to the state playoffs as a senior ... Had 92 tackles, 8.5 sacks, four forced fumbles and two blocked field goals over his career ... Was a second-team all-CIF honoree as a junior and a two-time all-league selection ... Played in the Blue-Grey All-America Bowl ... Also played basketball at SMHS ... Was a two-time all-academic selection ... Was a three-star recruit out of SMHS by Rivals, Scout and 247sports ... Picked OSU over San Diego State, Arizona and Nevada out of high school.

■ Rashad Scott

Defensive Back

6-2, 180

San Diego, Calif. (Helix High)

Lettered three years at nearby Helix High School in La Mesa, Calif. ... Helped the Highlanders to a 34-7 (.829) record over the three years, including a state championship appearance and 13-2 record in 2017 ... Had eight interceptions and 11 pass deflections in 2017 on defense ... A three-star recruit as an athlete by Rivals and a three-star recruit at wide receiver by 247sports ... According to Rivals, chose the Aztecs over other offers from Fresno State, Brigham Young, Wyoming, Utah State, UNLV, Hawai'i and San Jose State.

■ Kobe Smith

Wide Receiver

6-2, 175

Compton, Calif. (Junipero Serra High)

Played four seasons of varsity at Junipero Serra High School in Gardena, Calif. ... According to MaxPreps, finished with 119 receptions over the last three years for 1,914 yards (16.1 avg.) and 17 touchdowns ... Over the last two seasons totaled 107 catches for 1,689 yards (15.8 avg.) and 13 touchdowns ... Earned all-league honors each of the last three seasons ... A consensus three-star recruit by Rivals, 247sports and ESPN ... Received an ESPN scout grade of 78 ... According to Rivals, picked the Aztecs over other offers from USC, Notre Dame, Oregon, Washington State, Nebraska, Arizona, Fresno State, Oregon State, Rutgers, Illinois and San Jose State.



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■ TJ Sullivan

Wide Receiver

6-0, 180

San Diego, Calif. (Mt. Carmel High)

Earned three letters at Mr. Carmel High School in San Diego ... According to MaxPreps, finished with 71 catches for 1,132 yards (15.9 avg.) and 12 touchdowns in just 19 games over his career ... Also had a pair of interceptions as a junior in 2015 and a 99-yard kick return for a touchdown as a senior ... Was a two-time all-league selection ... Was a three-star recruit by ESPN and 247sports, and a two-star recruit by Rivals and Scout in 2016 ... Received a grade of 81 by 247sports and a mark of 72 by ESPN ... Was a track and field star, twice earning first-team all-league accolades and becoming a five-time Palomar League champion (two-time long jump, two-time 4x100 relay and one-time 4x400 relay) ... Was the vice president of the student-athlete leadership team (SALT).

■ Cameron Thomas

Defensive Line

6-5, 235

Carlsbad, Calif. (Carlsbad High)

Played three years at local Carlsbad High School in Carlsbad, Calif. ... Will join the Aztecs, who already have four players from Carlsbad High School in his older brother, Zachary, an offensive lineman, quarterback Christian Chapman, linebacker Troy Cassidy and offensive lineman Garrison Young ... According to MaxPreps, recorded 88 tackles the last two years to go along with five tackles for loss, 9.5 sacks, a pass deflection and a fumble recovery ... On offense as a tight end has 22 receptions for 294 yards (13.4 avg.) and four touchdowns ... A three-star recruit by 247sports and a two-star recruit by Rivals ... Also received offers from Oregon State, Wyoming and Navy.

■ Zidane Thomas

Running Back

5-11, 210

Peoria, Ariz. (Centennial High)

Earned three letters at Centennial High School in Peoria, Ariz. ... Led the Coyotes to a 38-5 (.884) record over the three years ... Racked up incredible numbers (according to MaxPreps) over the last two years, rushing 377 times for 4,011 yards (10.6 avg.) with 44 touchdowns ... Ran for 2,123 yards and 26 touchdowns in 2017 and 1,888 yards and 18 touchdowns in 2016 ... A three-star recruit by both Rivals and 247sports ... Ranked as the 14th-best recruit in the state of Arizona by 247sports ... Picked the Aztecs over other offers from Louisville, Utah, Iowa State, Boise State, New Mexico, Massachusetts and Northern Arizona.

■ Alama Uluave

Offensive Line

6-2, 315

Laie, Hawaii (Punahou High)

Was a three-year letterwinner at Punahou High School in Laie, Hawaii, the same school as Aztec linebacker brothers Ronley Lakalaka and Seyddrick Lakalaka ... Was first-team ILH and played in the Nike Final 5 ... Was a three-star recruit by both Rivals and 247sports ... Ranked as the seventh-best recruit in Hawaii by 247 sports and the 23rd-best center by the outlet ... Also played basketball and baseball, and competed on the track and field team ... Was a state champion in the shot put and the discus throw for the Buffs' track and field team won a state championship ... According to Rivals, also received offers from Washington State, Boise State, Fresno State, Army West Point, Texas Tech, Colorado State, Syracuse, Air Force, UNLV, Hawai'i and Yale.



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2018 SDSU Football Signing Day Press Conference

Head Coach Rocky Long

On National Signing Day:

"This day is a little weird and a whole lot different than National Signing Days in the past since we've had an early signing period in December. The drama and wondering if you are going to get letters of intent in this morning is completely different than it's ever been before. I think our coaches did a great job of evaluating talent and recruiting the local players that we thought could play since we had 11 local players sign with us, a couple here today and most of them in December. I think that's the highlight of this class, but it's a lot different. Usually you're here at four o'clock in the morning wondering if you're going to get letters of intent from back east or wherever and then you stay all day waiting and they come in or don't come in."

On if the national trend of kids flipping on commitments trickled down to SDSU:

"I think the early signing day really helped us. I don't know which one of these young men would have been attractive to any of those schools but I know there are four or five guys that signed with us in December that would've been hit hard the last two weeks to try and flip them to somebody else and since we were able to sign those guys in December, they weren't able to do that to our recruiting class. They have in the past and they have to everyone else too. I think what happened was 84 to 85 percent of Division I athletes signed in the early signing date. So that means there are 15 percent out there and probably more scholarships than players who can play at this level. The recruiting got down and dirty and that's why you saw so many flips today and yesterday."

On if signing 24 players is to purposely keep one slot open in case someone becomes available:

"No, our program is in the position right now that you have an 85 scholarship limit. So what happens sometimes is with the addition of 24, you're already at 85. We're not, we're right at 84 so there is one scholarship out there for someone that might pop up in the next couple weeks or spring recruiting that would help our football team. There will be a lot of guys available, like every year, after everybody has their spring practice. There will be a lot of graduate students getting ready to play their fifth year and thought they were going to be a starter and they end up not being a starter and they start hunting a place to graduate transfer to. That's also after our spring practice when we'll know our team a lot better and where we might need a player or two."

On how the recruiting process was for him:

"I think the early signing date helped us. I don't know how or if it even helped anyone else but it helped us. We're proud as a staff that we were able to attract so many local kids to stay here in town. And there are kids, no matter how good your program is, that don't want to stay home. They want to go away to college, but there are some that want to stay home that either don't think the local school is good enough or has a high enough profile to stay. I think it's taken four or five years, but we've bridged

that gap finally. If you look at the facts about how good this program has been the last three years, it's one of the top ten programs in the country. We don't get that kind of credit or publicity but there is hardly anybody that gets the kind of statistics [we do] in the entire country. I think that the local athletes see that. We might not get that credit except at the high school level but they want to be a part of our program."

On if this is a launch to even greater heights:

"That's my point, we're already there. We're not being given credit for being there, but we're already there. Now obviously our goal, like every other college team in the country, is to win every game and we haven't done that. But if you look at statistics over the last three years, we're already there. Everyone keeps wondering if there's some magic mountain we're supposed to climb but guess what? We're already there. We're playing at the level of as good a football team as there is in the country. Now I wish people would realize that because for us to get that national recognition, we have to get more people in the stands and more TV ratings and have the people on ESPN say we're good. Even though we're already there, there isn't anybody saying we are. That's reality so nobody thinks we are."

On the program having players chosen by the league's best professional team like Donnel Pumphrey with the Philadelphia Eagles:

"Well I think [Donnel] is lucky he was on the championship team. I think the Eagles played really well and had a great year but going into the season, they weren't one of the favorites. So I think he was lucky to be on a good team that didn't have a whole lot of injuries that played really well throughout the entire season. There's my point right there. Since we got four guys go to the combine, we have two guys that were a part of the Eagles organization – Darrell Greene is part of their practice roster – so we have two former Aztecs who were on the World Champion football team and I don't know how many other schools had two on the Eagles. Anybody know? Bet you it's just one or two, but we do. We've got two on the champions."

On being labeled "Running Back U" and the prospects of recruiting running backs:

"You would think that [it's easy to recruit running backs], I would think just the opposite. If you go back the last 10 years, almost every one of our running backs got a chance to play in the NFL. Not all of them made it, but they all had a chance. Now what we're finding is they assume we have someone else who's really good here and they want to come and play. Running backs think they should go in and play as freshmen, well now they're looking for a school that doesn't have any running backs and they assume we have some good running backs here already so it's not near as easy as you think. We do run the ball but if you look at our history, we have one guy that gets the ball 25 to 30 times and one guys who gets it 10 to 15. One guy's a senior and one guy's a junior so if I'm a freshman, I want to go someplace where they lost all their running backs."

On the practice situation in the spring:

"It's different and kind of exciting, we'll see if our players like the idea. We're remodeling our locker room so it affects the training room, the equipment room and our players have no place to dress or shower or any of that so it was going to be like Pop Warner days where they would take their uniforms home but they don't have anyone to wash them. So they'd be walking down the street carrying their helmet and their pads and their cleats to practice. So we're going to use the old Charger practice site. We're going to lease that for a month that we have 15 practices in. We're using their locker rooms, fields and training rooms. The city was nice enough to lease it to us so it's a change of scenery, might be a whole lot of fun. All the goal posts are gone and all the taping rooms in the training room are gone too, where'd they go?"

On how the facility looks:

"I don't know how it's looking now. When we looked 10 days ago, it looked kind of beat up but they assured us they're going to clean it up. The field didn't look very good but if you've seen our practice field after the last four or five games of the season, ours doesn't look very good either. And they've got a 60 yard turf field so we'll find a way to practice."

On if the fan base can get in there for practice much like the Chargers did:

"That's not up to us just like maintaining the fields is not up to us. That's a city run spot just like the stadium is."

On Carson Baker from Helix HS:

"I think everybody we signed, including the local guys, we signed for a reason because there is an open spot in our formula. We have a formula with how many players play that position and if everything was perfect, [the depth chart] would be senior, junior, sophomore and freshman. Obviously, nothing is perfect and we wanted another scholarship quarterback. We had one with us last year as a freshman who decided to stay home in Texas so that made us have a spot open for a young quarterback. We had one we had watched but we hadn't been scouting quarterbacks as heavily until we found out the young man from Texas wasn't coming back. Then we always evaluate the local kids first and we thought he was a really good player so there was no reason to go any other place if we can convince him to come here."

On if the team has lost anybody else due to opting out:

"We haven't had anybody opt out yet. We have some guys who, due to injuries, we don't know if they are going to be able to play yet. There are a couple that could be medical, two of them are going to try to go through spring practice and we'll find out real early if they are going to be able to play."

On Zidane Thomas from Arizona:

"See there's an interesting story. We tried to recruit him from Day 1 and he committed to one school, then got a lot of interest from other schools so he de-committed. He committed to another school in a Power 5 league, but they dropped him. Then he tried to commit to another Power 5 school that didn't have a scholarship for him right now but they could gray shirt him so he wouldn't come to school until January, he didn't like that idea. All of a sudden we were recruiting a running back to sign and we didn't have one so it's funny how sometimes that stuff works out. We recruited him back in December, so his high school coach contacted us and that's how we got him. He's a pretty good all-around running back and was a highly recruited guy, it just didn't go the way he wanted it to."

On the players at the NFL Combine:

"I think it says more about the players than our program and I'd like to remember how heavily those guys were recruited. Not very heavily, I don't think any of those guys had Power 5 offers. They were excellent high school players who didn't get the credit that they deserved and they came here and decided to prove to everybody else that they didn't get the credit that they deserved. They put the time and effort into developing their skills and had the right team attitude and they progressed through their college career and now they're potential NFL football players. It's as much them as anything we do and the parents that raised them because they come with the right attitude and they want to be good and nothing is going to stop them from being good and we're lucky to have them."

On if the recruiting rankings are biased toward the Power 5 schools:

"The ratings themselves are biased toward the Power 5 and to be honest with you, we don't give a darn how many stars they have beside their name because that us all related to services that spend money to rate those guys a certain way. They ask the Power 5

recruiting coordinators who they are going to recruit and those guys get more stars than the other guys, that's the way it works. Most of the time those guys are really good players. In my opinion, we had the best running back in the country last year [and] I think maybe he was a three star guy, maybe, could have been a two star guy. Does that mean they all made a mistake and we were just lucky or the star system is a bunch of baloney?"

On the relief that recruiting is over:

"It's always nice to have recruiting over because it's kind of intense. It won't be the most important decision of their lives, but it's very important. Where they are going to continue their education and maybe their football career. It's hard on coaches who are away from home a lot trying to convince young people to come to their program. It's a very difficult job. Head coaches are lucky because there are rules against us doing a lot of it so assistant coaches are working their fannies off and it gets very intense towards signing day. I'm sure they are a lot more relieved than I am because they do most the work."

On the earlier signing date this year:

"I'm sure a lot of us didn't know how many guys were going to sign in December and by far the majority of recruits out there signed in December. I think that the process is sped up with technology, I mean we've got a list of sophomores we're watching who are going to be juniors next year. So because you can see all their film on the computer, you're able to evaluate them quicker and better on whether they can play or not. Now all your time is spent on what kind of kids they are and what kinds of grades they get and all that kind of stuff. You don't have to hunt around for film or have it mailed to you, it's all done so quickly that the process is a lot faster, so I think it's easier to evaluate the kids you like and get them signed early."

On if TJ Sullivan is on campus:

"Yeah he will be at spring practice. He is the only one (that will practice)."

On a possible spring game for fans:

"We're going to try and have a spring game, we don't know where it's going to be yet. It's going to be hard to have it here because when we wanted to have it, the NCAA Regional Tournament is here on campus so it's almost impossible to have it here. In order to have it at Murphy Canyon, you'd have to bring it bleachers and everything else. We have taken it off campus before and take it to a high school or junior college, we might do that. It hasn't been decided yet."

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