USC Football Announces 2017 Signing Class

Many recruiting media outlets ranked USC's class in the national Top 5 and tops in the Pac-12.

Clay Helton

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Alijah Vera-Tucker OL 6-4 300 Oakland, CA (Bishop O'Dowd)

BIOGRAPHIES ON USC FOOTBALL'S 2017 SPRING NEWCOMERS

D. JOHNSON—He enrolled at USC in the spring of 2017 after transferring from a junior college. He did not play football in 2016 while attending Citrus Junior College in Glendora (Calif.). As a long snapper at Glendora (Calif.) High, he had 6 tackles as a 2015 senior, 2 tackles as a 2014 junior and 1 tackle as a 2013 sophomore. Current Trojan Matt Fink also prepped at Glendora.

KATOA—He enrolled at USC in the spring of 2017 after graduating a semester early from high school. He made 2016 Tacoma News Tribune Western 100, **Prep Star All-West Region**, USA Today All-Utah second team and Coaches All-State Class 5A second team as a senior linebacker, defensive end and quarterback at Layton (Utah) High. In 2016, he had 36 tackles, 2 sacks and a fumble recovery for a TD on defense, while on offense he ran for 784 yards on 117 carries (6.7 avg) with 14 TDs and threw for 299 yards with 3 TDs and 3 interceptions on 21-of-55 passing (38.2%). As a junior in 2015, he had 11 tackles, a sack and a fumble recovery on defense, plus he completed 59-of-102 passes (57.8%) for 784 yards with 6 TDs and 2 interceptions and ran for 334 yards on 83 attempts (4.0 avg) with 7 TDs on offense. As a 2014 sophomore, he had 40 tackles with 5 sacks, completed 26-of-65 passes (40.0%) for 311 yards with 5 TDs and 5 interceptions and ran for 54 yards on 63 carries (0.9 avg) with 3 TDs. His father, Fotu,

was a tight end at BYU (1985, 1988-90), his mother, Elizabeth, was a distance runner at BYU in 1990, his sister, Eliza, is a senior outside hitter on Utah's volleyball team, his brother-in-law, Rhett Nelson, pitched at Santa Clara (2010) and BYU (2014) and his uncle, Fred Katoa, was a nose guard at BYU (1989-90).

SEARS—He enrolled at USC in the spring of 2017 after graduating a semester early from high school. **He made 2016 Prep Star All-American Dream Team**, Tacoma News Tribune Western 100, Orange County Register Fab 15 second team, Cal-Hi Sports All-State first team, USA Today All-California second team, Orange County Register All-Orange County first team and All-South Coast League Offensive Player of the Year as a senior quarterback at San Clemente (Calif.) High. In 2016, he completed 223-of-338 passes (66.0%) for 2,602 yards with 37 TDs and 6 interceptions and ran for 1,135 yards on 171 carries (6.6 avg) with 9 TDs, plus he had an interception on defense. San Clemente won the 2016 CIF State 1-A championship and CIF Southern Section Division 2 title. As a 2015 junior, he made Cal-Hi Sports All-State Junior second team, All-CIF Southwest Division first team and All-Sea View League Offensive MVP as he completed 193-of-270 passes (71.5%) for 2,697 yards with 37 TDs and 2 interceptions and he ran for 862 yards on 112 attempts (7.7 avg) with 9 TDs, plus he caught a TD. As a 2014 sophomore mainly playing wide receiver while also backing up current USC quarterback Sam Darnold, he completed 18-of-34 passes (52.9%) for 215 yards, had 26 carries for 289 yards (11.1 avg) with 3 TDs and had 12 receptions for 178 yards (14.8 avg) with 3 TDs. Current Trojans Sam Darnold and Jake Russell also prepped at San Clemente.

TUIPULOTU—**He made 2016 Prep Star All-American**, Tacoma News Tribune Western 100, Tacoma News Tribune Northwest Nuggets, Orange County Register Fab 15 second team, USA Today All-Oregon Defensive Player of the Year, All-State Class 5A Defensive Player of the Year and All-Mid-Willamette Conference Defensive Player of the Year as a senior defensive tackle and offensive tackle at Central High in Independence (Ore.). In 2016, he had 62 tackles, 14 tackles for loss, 6 sacks, 4 fumble recoveries, 2 deflections and 1 blocked field goal. As a junior in 2015, he made All-State Class 5A Defensive Player of the Year and All-Mid-Willamette Conference Defensive Player of the Year while making 78 tackles, 28 tackles for loss, 13 sacks, 2 interceptions and 2 deflections. As a 2014 sophomore, he made Max Preps Sophomore All-American second team while getting 72 tackles, 22 tackles for loss, 12 sacks, 5 fumble recoveries and 1 forced fumble. He had 57 tackles and 1 blocked field goal as a 2013 freshman. He also wrestled at Central, winning the state Class 5A 285-pound championship as a junior. His cousin is former USC (2005-08) defensive tackle Fili Moala, who played in the NFL with the Indianapolis Colts (2009-14).

VORHEES—He enrolled at USC in the spring of 2017 after graduating a semester early from high school. **He was the 2016 Prep Star All-American**, Tacoma News Tribune Western 100, USA Today All-California second team, Cal-Hi Sports All-State second team, Cal-Hi Sports All-State Medium Schools first team, Fresno Bee All-Star and All-Central Sequoia League Lineman of the Year as a senior two-way tackle at Kingsburg (Calif.) High. In 2016, he had 32 tackles, 4 sacks and a fumble recovery for a TD on

defense. As a 2015 junior, he made Cal-Hi Sports All-State Medium Schools second team, Cal-Hi Sports All-State Junior second tam and Fresno Bee All-Star as he had 38 tackles on defense. He had 7 tackles and a fumble recovery as a 2014 sophomore.

BIOGRAPHIES ON USC FOOTBALL'S 2017 FALL NEWCOMERS

BOLDEN—He made 2016 Parade All-American first team, **Prep Star All-American Dream Team**, Max Preps All-American first team, Tacoma News Tribune Western 100, Orange County Register Fab 15 first team, USA Today All-Nevada Defensive Player of the Year, Las Vegas Review-Journal All-State first team and All-Southwest League as a senior safety at Bishop Gorman High in Las Vegas (Nev.). In 2016, he had 27 tackles, 5 tackles for loss, 1 sack, 7 interceptions (1 for a TD), 2 deflections, 1 fumble recovery (for a TD) and 1 blocked field goal as Bishop Gorman won its eighth consecutive state title and third straight USA Today national championship. As a junior in 2015, he had 55 tackles, 3 interceptions (1 for a TD) and 3 deflections. He had 30 tackles and an interception as a 2014 sophomore.

CARR—He **made 2016 Prep Star All-American Dream Team**, Max Preps All-American first team, Tacoma News Tribune Western 100, USA Today All-California first team, Cal-Hi Sports All-State second team, Cal-Hi Sports All-State Medium Schools first team, Orange County Register Fab 15 first team and Riverside Press-Enterprise All-Area second team as a senior running back at Summit High in Fontana (Calif.). In 2016, he ran for 2,123 yards on 233 carries (9.1 avg) with 31 TDs, plus caught 20 passes for 466 yards (23.3 avg) with 5 TDs, returned 5 kickoffs for 170 yards (34.0 avg) and 4 punts for 83 yards (20.8 avg) and made 12 tackles. As a junior in 2015, he made USA Today All-California second team Cal-Hi Sports All-State Junior first team and All-CIF Central Division.

ECHOLS—**He made 2016 Prep Star All-American Dream Team**, Tacoma News Tribune Western 100, USA Today All-California first team and Cal-Hi Sports All-State first team as a senior defensive end and linebacker at Cathedral High in Los Angeles (Calif.). In 2016, he made 79 tackles, 27 tackles for loss, 9 sacks, 1 interception (for a TD), 2 deflections and 1 forced fumble. As a junior in 2015, he made Max Preps All-State Medium Schools first team, All-CIF Southwest Division and Los Angeles Times All-Area first team while making 79 tackles, 27 tackles for loss, 17 sacks, 4 deflections, 3 fumble recoveries (1 for a TD) and 2 forced fumbles.

FALANIKO—**He made 2016 Prep Star All-West Region**, All-American Samoa High School Athletic Association first team and MVP of the All Poly Camp as a senior linebacker and wide receiver at Leone High in Pago Pago, American Samoa. As a junior in 2015, he was All-American Samoa High School Athletic Association first team and Fa'asamoa Initiative Outstanding Football Student-Athlete. He is the first Trojan footballer who prepped in American Samoa since Travis Tofi (2003-06).

FALO—**He made 2016 Prep Star All-American**, Tacoma News Tribune Western 100, USA Today All-California second team, Cal-Hi Sports All-State second team, Max Preps