

**JAMES MONROE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE  
NAMED GATORADE NEW YORK FOOTBALL PLAYER OF  
THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 5, 2025) — In its 41<sup>st</sup> year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Messiah Hampton of James Monroe High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade New York Football Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Hampton as New York's best high school football player, and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Peyton Manning (1993-94, Isidore Newman School, LA), Nick Singleton (2021-22, Governor Mifflin High School, PA) and Keelon Russell (2024-25, Duncanville High School, TX).

At the time of his selection, the 6-foot-1, 180-pound senior wide receiver and defensive back had led the Red Jackets (11-0) to a berth in the Class B state championship game. Hampton caught 58 passes for 1,126 yards and 12 touchdowns while also rushing for 342 yards and five scores through 11 games. Defensively, Hampton recorded 81 tackles and two interceptions. A two-time All-New York State selection, he was the 2023 Section V Class B Player of the Year.

Hampton has volunteered locally as a Monroe SMART (Sports Majors Athletics and Regents Track) student ambassador and runs his own Thanksgiving food drive. He has also donated his time as a motivational speaker at elementary schools and as part of beautification projects. "Messiah is definitely one of, if not the, most talented football players that I have seen come through this part of the state," said Alex Veltz, head coach of Batavia High School. "He has elite size, speed and athleticism. Any time he has his hands on the ball he is a threat to take it to the house."

Hampton has maintained a B average in the classroom. At the time of his selection, he had made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play football at the University of Oregon next fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the winners in each sport.

As part of Gatorade's commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 organizations.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [playeroftheyear.gatorade.com](https://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://x.com/Gatorade).

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