

SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE ARIZONA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (March 13, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Audrey Bhesania of Sandra Day O'Connor High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Arizona Girls Basketball 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 Bhesania as Arizona's best high school girls basketball player, and she joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Candace Parker (2002-03 & 2003-04, Naperville Central High School, IL) Paige Bueckers (2020-21, Hopkins High School, MN) and Aaliyah Chavez (2024-25, Monterey High School, TX).

The 6-foot senior guard/forward averaged 18.1 points, 8.9 rebounds and 4.6 assists per game this past season, leading the Eagles (24-3) to the Open State Championship game. A 2025 All-Arizona selection, Bhesania also averaged 2.6 steals and 2.0 blocks, shooting 46 percent from beyond the arc and 85 percent from the line to compile an eFG percentage of 60.3. A two-time All-Region Offensive Player of the Year honoree, she helped SDO win the 2024 Class 6A state title and is ranked as the state's No. 4 recruit in her class by PrepGirlsHoops.

Bhesania has volunteered as part of multiple community services initiatives in association with the Phoenix Union District in addition to donating her time to the Special Olympics as well as assisting the homeless during the holiday season. She has also served as an instructor with Christ's Church of the Valley Stars basketball and as a coach for youth players with Southwest Premier girls basketball. "I love Audrey Bhesania," said Alan Mitchell, head coach at Shadow Ridge High School. "She is strong and can score from all three levels and plays at a high level against tough competition. I think she's a great choice for Gatorade POY."

Bhesania has maintained a weighted 4.23 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play basketball at St. Mary's College (Calif.) this 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 or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.

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