

JOHNSTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE IOWA 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 Jenica Lewis of Johnston High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Iowa 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 Lewis as Iowa’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 5-foot-10 senior combo guard averaged 20.5 points, 6.0 rebounds, 3.3 assists and 2.7 steals per game this past season, leading the Dragons (27-0) to the Class 5A state title. Lewis shot 45 percent from the field and 84 percent from the free throw line to earn 2026 Des Moines Register All-Iowa recognition. A three-time All-State honoree entering this year, she was selected for the McDonald’s All-American Game this spring and is ranked as the nation’s No. 23 recruit in her class by PrepGirlsHoops.

Lewis has volunteered locally on behalf of the Ronald McDonald. She has also donated her time as a mentor with the Shoot 360 Camp, a camp counselor for CKP Athletics and a Peer Physical Education Partner supporting special needs youth participation in sports. “Jenica Lewis is the top player in the state of Iowa,” said Kristin Meyer, head coach at Dowling Catholic High School. “Her stats may not jump off the page, but a lot of the team success Johnston has achieved is in large part due to Jenica. Not only is she a great outside shooter and able to get to the basket off the dribble, but, in my opinion, she may be even better on the defensive end of the court.”

Lewis has maintained a weighted 3.23 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play basketball at the University of Notre Dame 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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