

## **CHRIST THE KING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEW YORK GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 13, 2026) — In its 41<sup>st</sup> year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Olivia Vukosa of Christ the King High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade New York 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 Vukosa as New York’s best high school girls basketball player, and she’s also been selected as a finalist for the distinguished Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced later this month. Vukosa 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 state’s returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-5 senior post player averaged 17.8 points, 18.1 rebounds, 5.5 assists and 4.4 blocks this past season, leading the Royals (22-6) to the Catholic High School Athletic Association state championship game. A finalist for the 2026 Naismith Award, Vukosa is a McDonald’s All-American Game selection and a member of the Croatian Under-20 Women’s National Team. She’s ranked as the nation’s No. 3 recruit in the Class of 2026 by ESPN.

Vukosa has volunteered locally as a peer tutor in math and science, and she has supervised campus tours for prospective students and their families. She has also donated her time as a youth basketball coach. “Olivia Vukosa does it all for CTK,” said Josh Suslak, head coach of St. Joseph by-the-Sea High School. “There are no holes in her game. Her size and IQ are constantly making it difficult for just about any opponent to score at the basket. She’s also an elite passer, sees the court well and can score at every level.”

Vukosa has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play basketball at the University of Connecticut 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](http://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](https://x.com/Gatorade).

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