

DAVID THIBODAUX STEM MAGNET ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE LOUISIANA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 12, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Ellison Haynes of David Thibodaux Stem Magnet Academy is the 2025-26 Gatorade Louisiana Boys Soccer 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 Haynes as Louisiana’s best high school boys soccer player, and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Alecko Eskandarian (1999-00, Bergen Catholic High School, New Jersey), Cristian Roldan (2012-13, El Rancho High School, California) and Dan Klink (2024-25, Loyola Blakefield, Maryland).

The 6-foot, 155-pound senior forward led the Bulldogs to a 14-7-1 record and the Division II regional final this past season. Haynes scored 39 goals and passed for 11 assists, recording a goal and assist in his final game as Thibodaux lost, 4-2, to Central Lafourche High. Haynes spent part of his sophomore and junior year abroad in Germany playing at the FC Bayern Munich International Soccer Academy before returning to Louisiana for his senior year. This past season, Haynes broke the school record for single-season (39) and career (64) goals. The Division II All-State Offensive MVP, he graduates as a three-time All-State selection.

Haynes has volunteered locally with Catholic Charities of Acadiana at the St. Joseph’s Diner soup kitchen. He has also served as a guest speaker and ambassador at the Positively Affirmed Youth Mental Health Summit, an organization trying to prioritize and destigmatize mental health. “Ellis is one of the most talented players I’ve had the chance to coach as well as coach against,” stated Edwin Castañeda, head coach of Southside High School. “The first thing you notice is how easy he makes the game look. He glides effortlessly on the field, he’s very rapid and he’s dangerous in 1v1 situations. He has the confidence to take players on and the ability to make things happen.”

Haynes has maintained a 3.53 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play soccer on scholarship at Xavier University in Louisiana 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.

###