

**GROVE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE OKLAHOMA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 6, 2023) — In its 38<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Emmanuel Crawford** of **Grove High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Oklahoma Football Player** of the Year. Crawford is the first Gatorade Oklahoma Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Grove High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Crawford as Oklahoma’s best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Crawford joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Trevor Lawrence (2018-19 & 2016-17, Cartersville High School, Ga.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.).

The 5-foot-10, 175-pound senior running back led the Ridgerunners to a 13-1 record and the semifinals of the 5A playoffs. Crawford rushed for 2,304 yards and 36 touchdowns on 230 carries, averaging 10 yards per attempt. He also caught 19 passes for 546 yards, averaging 28.7 yards per reception, to go with seven receiving touchdowns. In addition, Crawford returned a punt 60 yards for a touchdown. He concluded his career with the most career rushing yards (6,777 yards) in 5A history, averaging 235.3 rushing yards per game this past fall.

Crawford has volunteered locally with the Touch A Life Foundation, which helps rescue children from forced labor situations in Ghana. Born in Ghana and sold into slavery at age three, he was rescued by the Touch A Life Foundation and later adopted by the Crawford family. He also has donated his time as a committee member for Grove High School’s Change Our World (COW) Week, a student-led event that solicits funds for a local charity. “He is an outstanding human being, first of all, and also a great student,” said Claremore High School head coach Jarrett Hurt. “He is electric with the ball in his hands. He has great vision and outstanding speed.”

Crawford has maintained a 3.7 GPA in the classroom. At the time of his selection, he remained undecided upon a collegiate destination.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. 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 state winners in each sport.

Crawford joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Football Players of the Year Braylin Presley (2021-22, Bixby High School), Kendal Daniels (2020-21, Beggs High School), Brennan Presley (2019-20, Bixby High School), and Daxton Hill (2018-19, Booker T. Washington High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade’s Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade’s social impact partners, supporting Gatorade’s ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners’ grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

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 Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).