

**WINDSOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE CONNECTICUT GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (March 14, 2024) — In its 39<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ayanna Franks** of **Windsor High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Connecticut Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Franks is the first Gatorade Connecticut Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Windsor High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the court, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Franks as Connecticut’s best high school girls basketball player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Candace Parker (2003-04, 2002-03 & 2001-02, Naperville Central High School, Ill.), Paige Bueckers (2017-18, Hopkins High School, Minn.) and Juju Watkins (2022-23 & 2021-22, Sierra Canyon School, Calif.).

The 5-foot-9 senior guard averaged 25.7 points and 13.1 rebounds per game this past season, leading the Warriors (19-8) to the Class L state quarterfinals. Franks also averaged 4.2 steals and 2.4 assists per game. A 2024 McDonald’s All-American Game nominee, she concluded her prep career with 2,042 points.

A National Honor Society member, Franks has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach and guest speaker. She has also participated in the school’s marching and symphonic band, the theater program and as a member of Windsor’s leadership council and student council. “Not only is she almost unstoppable offensively, she’s a very good defender and exceptional rebounder,” said Sheila King, head coach of Berlin High School. “She’s willing to play hard at both ends of the floor—she’s a great player.”

Franks has maintained a 3.97 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Rhode Island this fall.

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.

Franks joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Girls Basketball Players of the Year Mackenzie Nelson (2022-23 & 2021-22, St. Luke’s School), Shailyn Pinkney (2020-21, East Hartford High School) and Allie Palmieri (2019-20, Greens Farms Academy), among the state’s list of former award winners.

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, Gatorade Player of the Year winners’ grants have totaled more than \$4.9 million across more than 1,600 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 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).

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