

**LONG ISLAND LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW YORK GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 14, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Syla Swords** of **Long Island Lutheran High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade New York Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Swords is the fifth Gatorade New York Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Long Island Lutheran 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 Swords as New York’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.).

At the time of her selection, the 6-foot senior guard had led the Crusaders to a 21-1 record and a berth in the Chipotle Nationals tournament. Swords averaged 17.6 points, 7.5 rebounds, 5.1 assists and 3.0 steals through 22 games. A member of the Canadian Under-17 Women’s National Team, she is a 2024 McDonald’s All-American Game selection and a two-time member of the Nike Hoop Summit World Team. She is ranked as the No. 11 recruit in the Class of 2025 by espnW.

Swords has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach. “Syla Swords is so good,” said Tamika Dudley, head coach of Sidwell Friends School (Washington, D.C.). “She is very versatile, makes the right decision with the ball, can score and is a lights-out shooter. Love that kid.”

Swords has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Michigan 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.

Swords joins recent Gatorade New York Girls Basketball Players of the Year Kate Koval (2022-23, Long Island Lutheran High School), Paris Clark (2021-22, Long Island Lutheran High School) and Sonia Citron (2020-21 & 2019-20, The Ursuline School), 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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