

**PONCHATOULA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE LOUISIANA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 21, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Allen Graves** of **Ponchatoula High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Louisiana Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Graves is the first Gatorade Louisiana Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Ponchatoula 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 Graves as Louisiana's best high school boys 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 LeBron James (2002-03 & 2001-02, St. Vincent - St. Mary High School, Ohio), Karl-Anthony Towns (2013-14 & 2012-13, St. Joseph High School, N.J.) and Jayson Tatum (2015-16, 2014-15 & 2013-14, Chaminade College Preparatory School, Mo.).

The 6-foot-10, 240-pound senior forward led the Green Wave to a 30-4 record and a second straight Non-Select Division I state championship this past season. Graves averaged 20.9 points, 12.1 rebounds, 2.8 assists, 2.6 blocks and 1.6 steals per game, capping his campaign with 19 points, 20 boards and eight blocks in a 75-60 win over Natchitoches Central High in the state final, earning Most Outstanding Player honors for a second straight year. Also a 2023 Class 5A First Team All-State selection, he concluded his prep basketball career with 1,492 points.

Graves has volunteered locally with his family's ministry, Love is the Key Outreach. He has also donated his time to the Special Olympics and as a youth basketball camp counselor. "Ponchatoula is one of the top teams in the state in any class and it's a direct reflection of Allen's impact," said Josh Carlin, head coach of Northshore High School. "He has the ability to post up, he shoots the pick-and-pop 3 with consistency and he can put the ball on the floor in transition. His length and athleticism allow him to make the same impact defensively."

Graves has maintained a 3.74 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at Santa Clara University 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.

Graves joins recent Gatorade Louisiana Boys Basketball Players of the Year Chris Lockett (2022-23, Isidore Newman School), Solomon Washington (2021-22, George Washington Carver Collegiate Academy), Carlos Stewart (2020-21, The Dunham School) and Reece Beekman (2019-20, Scotlandville Magnet High 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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