

**EASTSIDE CATHOLIC SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE WASHINGTON BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (March 21, 2024) — In its 39<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Jacob Cofie** of **Eastside Catholic School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Washington Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Cofie is the first Gatorade Washington Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Eastside Catholic 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 Cofie as Washington’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-9, 235-pound senior center led the Crusaders to a 24-6 record and the Class 3A state championship this past season. Cofie averaged 21.9 points, 12.2 rebounds, 6.3 assists and 2.3 steals, including 17 points and 13 boards in a 65-57 win over conference rival Rainier Beach High School in the state final. A McDonald’s All-American Game nominee, he is ranked as the nation’s No. 61 recruit in the Class of 2024 by ESPN.

Cofie has volunteered locally on behalf of the Boys & Girls Club of King County and he has donated his time as a youth basketball coach. “Jacob displays high-level skills at all positions,” said Brent Merritt, head coach of Eastside Catholic High School. “He has worked diligently on his ball-handling and passing and is now a triple threat any time he touches the ball, anywhere on the court.”

Cofie has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Virginia 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.

Cofie joins recent Gatorade Washington Boys Basketball Players of the Year Zoom Diallo (2022-23, Curtis Senior High School), Tyler Bilodeau (2021-22, Kamiakin High School), Jackson Grant (2020-21, Olympia High School), and Paolo Banchemo (2019-20, O’Dea 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](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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