

**GONZAGA COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 6, 2024) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kainoa Winston of Gonzaga College High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade District of Columbia Football Player of the Year**. Winston is the ninth Gatorade District of Columbia Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Gonzaga College High School.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes for their success on the field, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Winston as District of Columbia’s best high school football player, and he joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fl.), Peyton Manning (1993-94, Isidore Newman School, La.) and DJ Lagway (2023-24, Willis High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-11, 195-pound senior safety and running back recorded 71 tackles and two interceptions this past season, leading the Eagles (7-4) to the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference Capital Division Tournament semifinals. Winston also forced two fumbles and blocked two kicks. On offense, the three-time First Team All-WCAC honoree rushed for 225 yards and two scores in addition to passing for two touchdowns and catching one. He will participate in the Navy All-American Bowl in January.

An avid photographer, Winston has volunteered locally at the Father Horace McKenna Homeless Shelter and at the Franciscan Monastery. He has also donated his time as a youth football coach. “Kainoa is an amazing athlete and game-changer,” said Derian Quick, head coach of Archbishop Carroll High School. “He really was a force in the game we played, and we had to game-plan away from him in the second half.”

Winston has maintained a 3.71 GPA in the classroom. At the time of his selection, he had made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play football at the University of Michigan next fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states across 12 different high school sports – 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.

Winston joins recent Gatorade District of Columbia Football Players of the Year Da’Jaun Riggs (2023-24, St. John’s College High School), Nyckoles Harbor (2022-23 & 2021-22, Archbishop Carroll High School) and Trey Jamison (2020-21, Gonzaga College 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, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$5.6 million in grants to winners across more than 2,000 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 Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.