

**UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF JACKSON STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE TENNESSEE GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (March 13, 2025) — In its 40<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Haylen Ayers** of **University School of Jackson** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Tennessee Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Ayers is the first Gatorade Tennessee Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from University School of Jackson.

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 court, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Ayers as Tennessee's best high school girls basketball player, and she joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Candace Parker (2002-03 & 2003-04, Naperville Central High School, Illinois), Paige Bueckers (2019-20, Hopkins High School, Minnesota) and Joyce Edwards (2023-24, Camden High School, South Carolina).

The 6-foot sophomore guard averaged 21.8 points and 8.0 rebounds per game this past season, leading the Bruins (26-4) to the Division II-A state tournament semifinals. Ayers also averaged 4.0 assists and 1.8 steals, and she contributed 40 points and 13 rebounds in a 64-57, double-overtime loss to the Webb School for Girls in the state semifinals. The 2024 Division II-A Miss Basketball winner as a freshman, Ayers is a Naismith Award Honorable Mention All-American selection. She is ranked as the nation’s No. 3 recruit in the Class of 2027 by espnW and 247Sports and concluded her sophomore year with 1,620 points in her prep basketball career.

Ayers has volunteered locally as part of multiple community service initiatives through her church. “Haylen is an incredible player,” said Matt Coble, head coach of Trinity Christian Academy. “She can really shoot and score the ball, but what separates her is her passing and basketball IQ. The impact she has on that team is beyond comparison. She raises the level of play of all her teammates.”

Ayers has maintained a 4.38 weighted GPA in the classroom. She will begin her junior year of high school this 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.

Ayers joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Girls Basketball Players of the Year Imari Berry (2023-24, Clarksville High School), Jaloni Cambridge (2022-23, Ensworth School), Karly Weathers (2021-22, Loretto High School) and Lashae Dwyer (2020-21, The Webb 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](http://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](https://x.com/Gatorade).