

**GARFIELD HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE OHIO BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 20, 2025)— In its 40th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Marcus Johnson** of **Garfield Heights High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Ohio Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Johnson is the first Gatorade Ohio Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Garfield Heights 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 court, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Johnson as Ohio's best high school boys basketball player and he joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Karl-Anthony Towns (2012-13 & 2013-14, St. Joseph High School, N.J.), Jayson Tatum (2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16, Chaminade College Preparatory School, Mo.) and Cooper Flagg (2023-24, Montverde Academy, Fl.).

At the time of his selection, the 6-foot-2, 180-pound junior guard had led the Bulldogs to a 22-2 record and a berth in the Division III state semifinals. The state’s returning Gatorade Player of the Year, Johnson averaged 29.2 points, 4.9 rebounds, 3.2 assists and 1.9 steals through 24 games. A two-time First Team All-Ohio selection, he’s ranked as the nation’s No. 22 recruit in the Class of 2026 by ESPN.com.

Johnson is a member of a bible study group and has volunteered locally as a peer tutor. “Marcus is a truly special player,” said Sonny Johnson, head coach of Garfield Heights High School. “He’s the kind of teammate you can always rely on—someone who lifts those around him and makes everyone better. He embodies unselfishness yet has the rare ability to take over a game when it matters most.”

Johnson has maintained a 3.52 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his senior 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.

Two-time winner Johnson joins recent Gatorade Ohio Boys Basketball Players of the Year George Washington III (2022-23, Chaminade Julianne Catholic High School), Paul McMillan IV (2021-22, Woodward Career Technical High School) and Chris Livingston (2020-21, Buchtel 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](https://www.x.com/Gatorade).