

CLAY COMMUNITY CENTER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE KANSAS BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 3, 2025) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Cole Pladson of Clay Community Center High School is the 2024-25 Gatorade Kansas Baseball Player of the Year.

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 Pladson as Kansas' best high school baseball player, and he joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Gary Sheffield (1985-86, Hillsborough High School, Florida), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Konnor Griffin (2023-24, Jackson Preparatory School, Mississippi).

At the time of his selection, the 5-foot-11, 195-pound senior center fielder and right-handed pitcher had led the Tigers (19-6) to the Class 4A West Region 3 title and a berth in the state tournament quarterfinals this season. Pladson batted .587 with 12 home runs and 46 RBI through 25 games, producing a .787 OBP, a 2.059 OPS and a .714 isolated power percentage. On the mound, he was 5-3 with a 3.26 ERA entering the state postseason, fanning 63 batters in 43 innings. Pladson added 17 steals on 18 attempts. Ranked as the nation's No. 193 prospect in his class, he was also the state's 2023-24 Gatorade Baseball Player of the Year.

A three-year member of the Future Business Leaders of America club at his school and current vice president, he has volunteered locally with his church youth group in addition to donating his time to a community blood- donation drive and assisting with a building demolition project. He has also served as a youth football and basketball camp instructor. "Cole is a hard-working, quiet and very humble young man," said Clay Community Center High School head coach Andy Bent. "Cole is 'there' to play baseball and help his team win. I've known he was going to do big things in the sport since he was in third grade."

Pladson has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play baseball at Oklahoma State 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 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.

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, Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.