



## NAISMITH BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME ANNOUNCES PRESEASON WATCH LIST FOR THE 2026 MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SHOOTING GUARD OF THE YEAR AWARDS

- Fan Voting Starts Friday, October 31 -

**SPRINGFIELD, MASS. (October 28, 2025)** — The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced the 20 watch-list candidates for the 2026 Jerry West Award and, in partnership with the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA), the 20 watch-list candidates for the 2026 Ann Meyers Drysdale Award.

The annual Jerry West Award, named after the late Class of 1980 Hall of Famer and 1959 NCAA Final Four Most Valuable Player, celebrates its 12th year by highlighting the top shooting guards in Division I men's college basketball.

The Ann Meyers Drysdale Award, in its ninth year, honors the top shooting guard in women's NCAA Division I college basketball. It is named after the Class of 1993 Hall of Famer, the first player, regardless of gender, to be chosen for an All-America Team in four consecutive college seasons.

### 2026 Jerry West Award Candidates\*

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Brayden Burries  | Arizona        |
| Richie Saunders  | BYU            |
| Josh Dix         | Creighton      |
| Isaiah Evans     | Duke           |
| Xaivian Lee      | Florida        |
| Emanuel Sharp    | Houston        |
| Kylan Boswell    | Illinois       |
| PJ Haggerty      | Kansas State   |
| Otega Oweh       | Kentucky       |
| Ryan Conwell     | Louisville     |
| Seth Trimble     | North Carolina |
| Anthony Roy      | Oklahoma State |
| Jason Edwards    | Providence     |
| Ian Jackson      | St. John's     |
| Solo Ball        | UConn          |
| Rodney Rice      | USC            |
| Mason Falslev    | Utah State     |
| Malik Thomas     | Virginia       |
| Wesley Yates III | Washington     |
| John Blackwell   | Wisconsin      |

### 2026 Ann Meyers Drysdale Award Candidates\*

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Taliah Scott     | Baylor         |
| Delaney Gibb     | BYU            |
| Lulu Twidale     | Cal            |
| Ashlon Jackson   | Duke           |
| Elle Evans       | Kansas         |
| Tajianna Roberts | Louisville     |
| Flau'jae Johnson | LSU            |
| Kaylene Smikle   | Maryland       |
| Syla Swords      | Michigan       |
| Zamareya Jones   | NC State       |
| Payton Verhulst  | Oklahoma       |
| Rachel Ullstrom  | Richmond       |
| Ta'Niya Latson   | South Carolina |
| Laila Phelia     | Syracuse       |
| Ruby Whitehorn   | Tennessee      |
| Gianna Kneepkens | UCLA           |
| Azzi Fudd        | UConn          |
| Destiny Leo      | UNLV           |
| Kara Dunn        | USC            |
| Mikayla Blakes   | Vanderbilt     |

*\*Players can play their way onto and off the list at any point in the 2025-26 season.*

Fans are encouraged to participate in Fan Voting in each of the three rounds starting on Friday, October 31. In late January, the watch list of 20 players for the 2026 Jerry West and Ann Meyers Drysdale Awards will be narrowed to 10, and then in late February, to just five. In March, the five finalists will be

presented to West's family, Meyers Drysdale, and the Hall of Fame's selection committees, where winners will be selected. The Selection Committees for the Jerry West and Ann Meyers Drysdale Awards are composed of top men's and women's college basketball personnel, including media members, head coaches, sports information directors, and Hall of Famers.

The winner of the 2026 West and Meyers Drysdale Awards will be presented on a to-be-determined date, along with the other four members of the Men's and Women's Starting Five. Additional awards being presented include the Bob Cousy and Nancy Lieberman Awards (Point Guard), Julius Erving and Cheryl Miller Awards (Small Forward), Karl Malone and Katrina McClain Awards (Power Forward), and the Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Lisa Leslie Awards (Center).

Previous winners of the Jerry West Award are **Chaz Lanier**, Tennessee (2025), **RJ Davis**, North Carolina (2024), **Marcus Sasser**, Houston (2023), **Johnny Davis**, Wisconsin (2022), **Chris Duarte**, Oregon (2021), **Myles Powell**, Seton Hall (2020), **RJ Barrett**, Duke (2019), **Carsen Edwards**, Purdue (2018), **Malik Monk**, Kentucky (2017), **Buddy Hield**, Oklahoma (2016), and **D'Angelo Russell**, Ohio State (2015).

Previous winners of the Ann Meyers Drysdale Award are **JuJu Watkins**, USC (2024-25), **Zia Cooke**, South Carolina (2023), **Christyn Williams**, UConn (2022), **Ashley Owusu**, Maryland (2021), **Aari McDonald**, Arizona (2020), **Asia Durr**, Louisville (2019), and **Victoria Vivians**, Mississippi State (2018).

For more information on the 2025 Jerry West and Ann Meyers Drysdale Awards and the latest updates, visit [hoophallawards.com](https://hoophallawards.com) and follow **@hoophallu**, **#WestAward**, and **#MeyersDrysdaleAward** on X and Instagram.

#### **About the WBCA:**

Founded in 1981, the Women's Basketball Coaches Association is the professional association for coaches of women's and girls' basketball at all levels of competition. The WBCA offers educational resources that coaches need to help make themselves better leaders, teachers and mentors to their players; provides opportunities for coaches to connect with peers in the profession; serves as the unifying voice of a diverse community of coaches to those organizations that control the game; and celebrates those coaches, players and other individuals who excel each year and contribute to the advancement of the sport. For more information, visit us online: [WBCA.org](https://wbc.org), follow **@wbca1981** or call 1-770-279-8027.

#### **About the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame**

Located in Springfield, Massachusetts, the city where basketball was born, the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame is an independent nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to promoting, preserving, and celebrating the game of basketball at every level – men and women, amateur and professional players, coaches and contributors, both domestically and internationally. The Hall of Fame museum is home to more than 475 inductees and over 40,000 square feet of basketball history. Nearly 200,000 people visit the Hall of Fame museum each year to learn about the game, experience the interactive exhibits and test their skills on the Jerry Colangelo "Court of Dreams." Best known for its annual marquee Enshrinement Ceremony honoring the game's elite, the Hall of Fame also operates over 150 high school and collegiate competitions annually throughout the country and abroad. For more information on the Basketball Hall of Fame organization, its museum, and events, visit [hoophall.com](https://hoophall.com) and follow **@hoophallu**.

#### **Basketball Hall of Fame Media Contact**

Nicole Schuermann, Position Sports // [mediarelations@positionsports.com](mailto:mediarelations@positionsports.com)