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

- Fan Voting Starts Friday, October 31 -

**SPRINGFIELD, MASS. (October 29, 2025)** — The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced the 20 watch-list candidates for the 2026 Julius Erving Award and, in partnership with the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA), the 20 watch-list candidates for the 2026 Cheryl Miller Award.

The annual Julius Erving Award, named after the Class of 1993 Hall of Famer and 17-year professional basketball player, celebrates its 12th year by recognizing the top small forwards in Division I men's college basketball.

The Cheryl Miller Award, in its ninth year, honors the top small forwards in women's Division I women's college basketball. It is named after the three-time Naismith Player of the Year and Class of 1995 Hall of Famer.

### 2026 Julius Erving Award Candidates\*

Karter Knox	Arkansas
Tounde Yessoufou	Baylor
AJ Dybantsa	BYU
Dame Sarr	Duke
Derrion Reid	Oklahoma
Isiah Harwell	Houston
Andrej Stojaković	Illinois
Tucker DeVries	Indiana
Milan Momcilovic	Iowa State
Coen Carr	Michigan State
Darrion Williams	NC State
Devin Royal	Ohio State
Fletcher Loyer	Purdue
Miles Byrd	SDSU
Nate Ament	Tennessee
Dailyn Swain	Texas
LeJuan Watts	Texas Tech
Eric Dailey Jr.	UCLA
Braylon Mullins	UConn
Chad Baker-Mazara	USC

### 2026 Cheryl Miller Award Candidates\*

Bella Fontleroy	Baylor
Jadyn Donovan	Duke
Jordan Obi	Kentucky
Skylar Jones	Louisville
Mikaylah Williams	LSU
Adrianna Smith	Maine
Yarden Garzon	Maryland
Olivia Olson	Michigan
Grace VanSlooten	Michigan State
Grace Slaughter	Missouri
Nyla Harris	North Carolina
Sahara Williams	Oklahoma
Stailee Heard	Oklahoma State
Cotie McMahon	Ole Miss
Tierra Simon	Richmond
Maryam Dauda	South Carolina
Zee Spearman	Tennessee
Madison Booker	Texas
Gabriela Jaquez	UCLA
Caroline Ducharme	UConn

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

Fans can support their favorite player by participating in Fan Voting starting Friday, October 31. In late January, the watch list of 20 players for the 2026 Julius Erving and Cheryl Miller Awards will be narrowed to 10, and then in late February, to just five. In March, the five finalists will be presented to Erving, Miller,

and the Hall of Fame's selection committees, where winners will be selected. The Selection Committees for the Julius Erving and Cheryl Miller 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 Erving and Miller 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), Jerry West and Ann Meyers Drysdale Awards (Shooting Guard), Karl Malone and Katrina McClain Awards (Power Forward), and the Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Lisa Leslie Awards (Center).

Previous winners of the Julius Erving Award are **Cooper Flagg**, Duke (2025), **Dalton Knecht**, Tennessee (2024), **Jalen Wilson**, Kansas (2023), **Wendell Moore Jr.**, Duke (2022), **Corey Kispert**, Gonzaga (2021), **Saddiq Bey**, Villanova (2020), **Rui Hachimura**, Gonzaga (2019), **Mikal Bridges**, Villanova (2018), **Josh Hart**, Villanova (2017), **Denzel Valentine**, Michigan State (2016), and **Stanley Johnson**, Arizona (2015).

Previous winners of the Cheryl Miller Award are **Madison Booker**, Texas (2024-25), **Ashley Joens**, Iowa State (2021-23), **Satou Sabally**, Oregon (2020), **Bridget Carleton**, Iowa State (2019), and **Gabby Williams**, Connecticut (2018).

For more information on the 2025 Julius Erving and Cheryl Miller Awards and the latest updates, visit [hoophallawards.com](https://hoophallawards.com) and follow **@hoophallu**, **#ErvingAward**, and **#MillerAward** 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://wbca.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 Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame organization, its museum, and events, visit [hoophall.com](https://hoophall.com) and follow **@hoophallu**.

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

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