

CHICAGO BEARS NAME GYNEEN ALI FIFTH RECIPIENT OF THE 2026 COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL ALL-STAR AWARD

The Chicago Bears announce Gyneen Ali, a junior student-athlete at Carl Sandburg High School in Orland Park, Ill., as the fifth recipient of the 2026 Community High School All-Star Award, brought to you by Athletico Physical Therapy.

As part of its ongoing recognition of high school student-athletes throughout March and April who demonstrate leadership, character and a positive impact beyond the game, the Chicago Bears highlight Ali for her continued involvement in community service while balancing academic and athletic responsibilities.

Nominated by her coaches, Ali was described as a student-athlete who leads through her work ethic, selflessness and consistency in her day-to-day actions. She is also known for her generosity in giving back to her community, having accumulated more than 192 hours of community service during her high school career.

With a strong emphasis on giving back, Ali volunteers regularly at a local hospital, where she assists patients and hospital staff during weekend shifts. In this role, she helps guide visitors to their destinations within the hospital, supports front desk operations and assists with maintaining an organized and efficient environment for patients and their families. She also contributes to ensuring that visitors have a clear understanding of where to go and who to connect with during their time at the facility, especially during difficult moments many may be experiencing. Ali developed an interest in volunteering in a hospital setting as she looks to contribute to environments that provide care, support and essential services to others in her community.

In addition to her work at the hospital, Ali continues to take on service-based roles within her school community. She serves as an academic tutor in her school's math lab during her lunch period, where she assists fellow students with coursework and helps reinforce foundational math concepts. Through this role, she contributes to a peer-support environment focused on improving academic performance and confidence among students.

Ali's commitment to putting in the effort does not stop there, as it extends into the classroom, where she maintains a 4.83 GPA while enrolled in a full schedule of Advanced Placement and Honors courses. She balances these academic responsibilities alongside her community service and athletic commitments throughout the school year. As she enters her final year of high school, Ali continues to prepare for the next step in her academic journey, with plans to pursue higher education. Her current academic track record positions her to continue developing her leadership skills in a collegiate setting.

That same focus also translates into her athletic endeavors. Since the launch of Carl Sandburg's girls flag football program during its inaugural 2023 season, Ali has been part of the program from the beginning, becoming one of the first student-athletes to represent her school in a sport that continues to expand across Illinois. She made an immediate impact in the program's first-ever game as a freshman, recording the school's first interception. Over the past three seasons, she has contributed as a two-way player at wide receiver and defensive back, and currently holds the program record for career interceptions.

In addition to girls flag football, Ali competes on the school's basketball team. Outside of the school year, she works as a lifeguard and teaches swimming lessons to children in her community, where she provides instruction on water safety and basic swimming techniques.

Ali continues to set an example as a student who balances her athletic commitments with her academic and community responsibilities, contributing across multiple areas throughout the school year. Her approach reflects how consistent effort across different areas can support both individual development and impact within her school and community.

As part of the Community High School All-Star Award, each recipient will receive a custom hand-painted football, a gift bag and an invitation to a future Chicago Bears event. Additionally, the Chicago Bears will donate \$500 to a charitable organization of the honoree's choosing.

About Community High School All-Star Award

Now in its sixth year, the Community High School All-Star Award continues to highlight student-athletes who make meaningful contributions to their schools and communities. In partnership with Athletico Physical Therapy, the Chicago Bears created this initiative to recognize high school football and girls flag football players who use their leadership, teamwork and service to create a lasting impact beyond the season. The program encourages student-athletes to stay engaged in their communities during the offseason, using their platform to give back through volunteerism, mentorship and service initiatives. Since its inception, the program has recognized more than 45 student-athletes and contributed more than \$22,500 to charitable organizations selected by the honorees.

