

CHICAGO BEARS NAME THALIA ABURTO EIGHTH RECIPIENT OF THE 2026 COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL ALL-STAR AWARD

The Chicago Bears announce Thalia Aburto, a junior student-athlete at Oswego High School in Oswego, Ill., as the eighth 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 Aburto for her commitment to serving others, her leadership within her school community and her growth as a multi-sport athlete.

Nominated by her coaches at Oswego High School, Aburto is recognized for her leadership and involvement in the community, logging 312 community service hours across a range of school and community-based initiatives. Her work includes L.A.S.O. (Latino Alliance Student Organization), where she supports cultural awareness and student engagement initiatives. She is also involved in B.I.O.N.I.C. (Believe It Or Not I Care), a peer support group focused on inclusion and assisting students within her school community. In 2024, the program was recognized with an Award of Special Recognition by the Illinois State Board of Education for its positive impact.

Aburto participates in Junioresettes, a service-based organization made up of students ranging from middle school through high school who engage in volunteer efforts aimed at supporting the local community. Through the program, she contributes to projects selected by the group and takes part in committee-based initiatives aligned with community needs.

Aburto consistently volunteers through Letters of Love, an organization that creates and distributes handwritten messages to individuals facing serious illnesses and medical challenges, where she helps write and assemble letters for patients and their families. She also serves on the Junior Class Committee, contributing to the planning and execution of school events and student-led initiatives.

Within the school environment, Aburto has maintained her involvement across academic and extracurricular activities while taking on additional responsibilities at home as her family navigates a difficult time supporting a medical diagnosis of a loved one close to her family. During this time, she has continued participating in school programs and service efforts while balancing increased responsibilities outside of school.

On the field, Aburto serves as a varsity captain for the Oswego High School girls flag football team and also competes in lacrosse. During the most recent season, she played a role in helping guide the flag football program to its first winning record in just its second year of existence, following a 1-6 mark in its inaugural season. The team advanced to the postseason but fell short in the playoffs, marking a step forward in the program's early development.

As a captain, her role has included helping organize practices, supporting the integration of new players and reinforcing team structure as the program continues to grow. She has also played a part in helping her team navigate a sport that is new for many participants, assisting teammates in understanding the rules, structure and flow of the game. She has contributed to building consistency within a relatively new program, helping establish expectations and continuity from one season to the next. With Aburto entering her final year of high school, the Oswego Panthers girls flag football team will look to build on its progress and return next season with the goal of advancing further in the postseason and competing for the program's first IHSA title.

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.

