

HAWAIIAN
AIRLINES
**DIAMOND
HEAD**
CLASSIC





Happy holidays from our ‘ohana to yours

Welcome to the 2024 Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic. As Hawaii’s largest and longest-serving airline, now celebrating 95 years of service, we’re excited to support this tournament — it’s one of our favorite local holiday traditions.

If you’re visiting Hawai‘i, we hope you enjoy your stay during this special time of year. And if you’re kama‘āina, we hope to be part of your travel plans soon, especially with Huaka‘i by Hawaiian benefits starting in January. (Join for free at HawaiianAirlines.com/Huakai)

We’re proud to serve our home with 120+ daily flights between the Islands, plus non-stop flights between Hawai‘i and the Continental U.S., Asia and the South Pacific.

To us, the journey is half the fun. On our flights, you enjoy free high-speed internet. You hear the stories of Hawai‘i through our in-flight entertainment and Hana Hou! magazine. You may even get a personal recommendation about the best places to eat or surf.

Truthfully, we’d love to tell you more, like about booking with no change fees* or earning miles that never expire. However, your attention is needed on the court.

From all of us at Hawaiian Airlines, we wish you a joyful holiday season. We look forward to welcoming you on board.



*For tickets purchased or HawaiianMiles redeemed for Main Cabin fares and higher.

ALOHA!

On behalf of ESPN, welcome to the 15th annual Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic!

We are excited to welcome our fans and visitors back to Hawai'i for this annual tradition. The combination of quality basketball programs, the spirit of Aloha, and the natural beauty of the islands make the Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic truly a one-of-a-kind sporting event.

Our staff of dedicated, experienced personnel and volunteers look forward to sharing this experience with you. It is our goal to showcase a great basketball tournament as well as an enjoyable and unique holiday event with you and your family.

WHO WILL JOIN OUR PREVIOUS CHAMPIONSHIP TEAMS?

2009 - USC

2010 - Butler

2011 - Kansas State

2012 - Arizona

2013 - Iowa State

2014 - George Washington

2015 - Oklahoma

2016 - San Diego State

2017 - USC

2018 - Texas Christian University

2019 - Houston

2020 - Event not held due to COVID-19

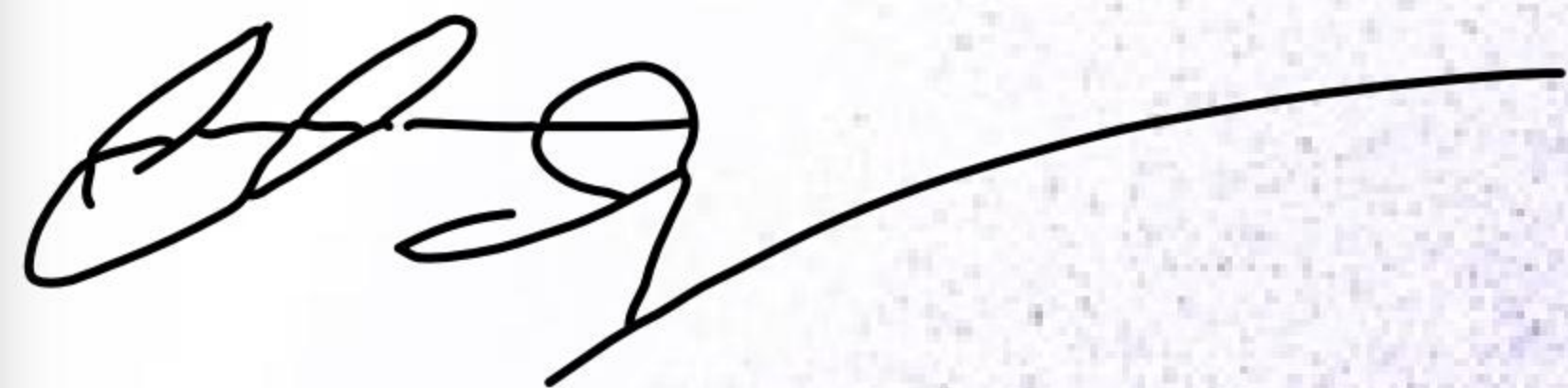
2021 - Vanderbilt

2022 - Hawai'i

2023 - Nevada

Mahalo for supporting the Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic.

Enjoy the games!



CLINT OVERBY

Vice President
ESPN Events





HA'AHEO MĀKOU I KE KĀKO'O
I NĀ NANI O KO KĀKOU 'ĀINA.

WE ARE PROUD TO SUPPORT THE HAWAIIAN AIRLINES
DIAMOND HEAD CLASSIC.

The most authentic and meaningful practices of *aloha* and *mālama* happen in our communities.
Events like this help us connect with what makes our Hawai'i so special.

HAWAII TOURISM[™]
AUTHORITY





A MESSAGE FROM

HAWAII TOURISM

AUTHORITY

Aloha!

We're thrilled to welcome all the players, coaches, their families, sponsors, community members, and basketball fans to the Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic!

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority is honored to continue our partnership with this tournament, one of many major events and festivals that offer unique and enriching experiences for both residents and visitors. Over the past decade, HTA has partnered with over 1,700 programs and events that support our community, preserve our natural resources, and celebrate Hawaiian culture.

The Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic aligns with our commitment to mālama Hawai'i (care for our beloved home), and we're so grateful to have these eight teams here in the Hawaiian Islands for what promises to be an exciting tournament. We're also proud to support our Rainbow Warriors as they compete against the visiting teams right here on their home court.

We extend our heartfelt mahalo to the event organizers, staff, ESPN Events, and the University of Hawai'i Athletics family who make this tournament possible.

Mahalo and Happy Holidays!



Daniel Nāho'opi'i
Interim President & CEO
Hawai'i Tourism Authority



SLAM DUNK FOR ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I: LANGUAGE MEETS BASKETBALL

In Hawai‘i, we are fortunate to hold a priceless cultural gem – ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, the Hawaiian language. This beautiful and expressive language, once endangered, is experiencing a remarkable comeback. Efforts across education, technology, and community initiatives have all contributed to its resurgence. Among the more surprising contributors to this revival is the world of sports – basketball, in particular – a game that holds a special place in the hearts of many islanders.

‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i: A Language Rooted in Legacy

‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i is far more than a means of communication. It serves as the living expression of Native Hawaiian culture, reflecting a worldview and values unique to Hawai‘i. After Western contact in the late 1700s, the language saw a dramatic decline, particularly under policies that promoted English at the expense of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. However, the Hawaiian Renaissance of the 1970s sparked a resurgence in pride and interest in Hawaiian culture, leading to the growth of immersion schools and university-level language programs.

Where Basketball and Language Collide

The dynamic energy of basketball has created a surprising and exciting opportunity to incorporate ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i into everyday life. By seamlessly integrating Hawaiian terminology into basketball, players and fans alike are engaging with the language in a way that feels natural and fun. This unique intersection of sport and culture invites everyone to connect with Hawaiian traditions while enjoying one of the world’s most popular games.

Why It Matters: A Language Reborn on the Court

Bringing ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i into basketball is more than just a novelty; it’s an opportunity for immersion. Language thrives when it is used in lively, meaningful settings, and basketball provides the perfect backdrop. Whether calling out plays, cheering from the stands, or sharing post-game highlights, the inclusion of Hawaiian terms fosters deeper engagement with the language and culture.

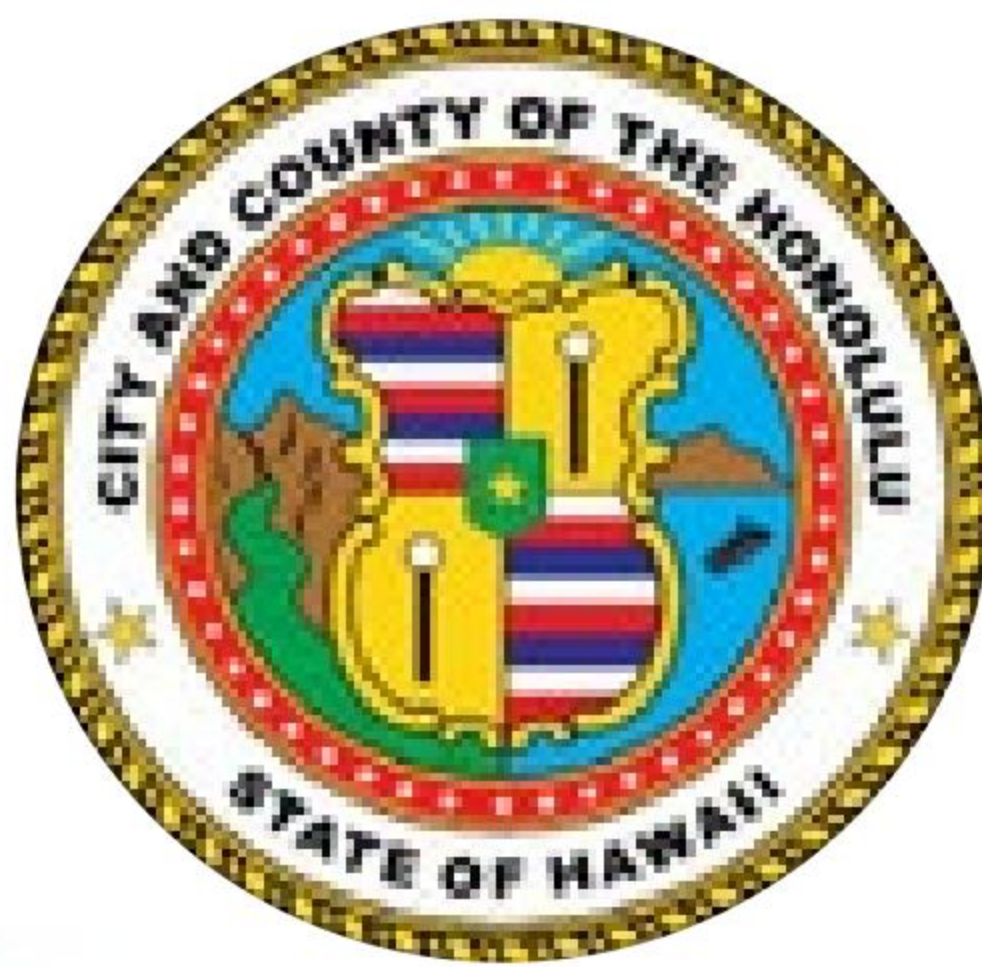
Beyond Basketball: Everyday Reconnection

While basketball provides a compelling example, this integration is just one effort in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i’s revitalization. By weaving Hawaiian language into modern activities, we elevate ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i as a vibrant, living language rather than a historical artifact. The success of initiatives like this inspires broader applications in other sports, arts, and everyday life, reminding everyone that Hawaiian culture has a place in today’s global community.

The revival of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i is more than a linguistic victory; it is a testament to the strength and resilience of Hawaiian culture. Incorporating it into popular sports like basketball offers a unique and effective way to preserve its legacy. The next time you take to the court or cheer from the sidelines, remember that you’re participating in something far greater than a game – you’re contributing to the perpetuation of a treasured cultural heritage.

Nā Hua‘ōleo Kinipōpō: Basketball Terms

English	‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i	English	‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i
Basketball	Kinipōpō hīna‘i	Go (forward)	Imua
Championship	Ho‘okūkū kahului	Keep going (strive)	Kūlia
Coach	Ka‘i ‘ālapa	Pass	Kīloi
Defense	Pale	Player	Mea pā‘ani kinipōpō
Dribble	Pākimokimo	Referee	‘Uao ha‘uki
Hooray	Hulō	Score	Helu‘ai
Foul	Pā‘ani hewa	Team	Hui



A MESSAGE FROM **MAYOR RICK BLANGIARDI**

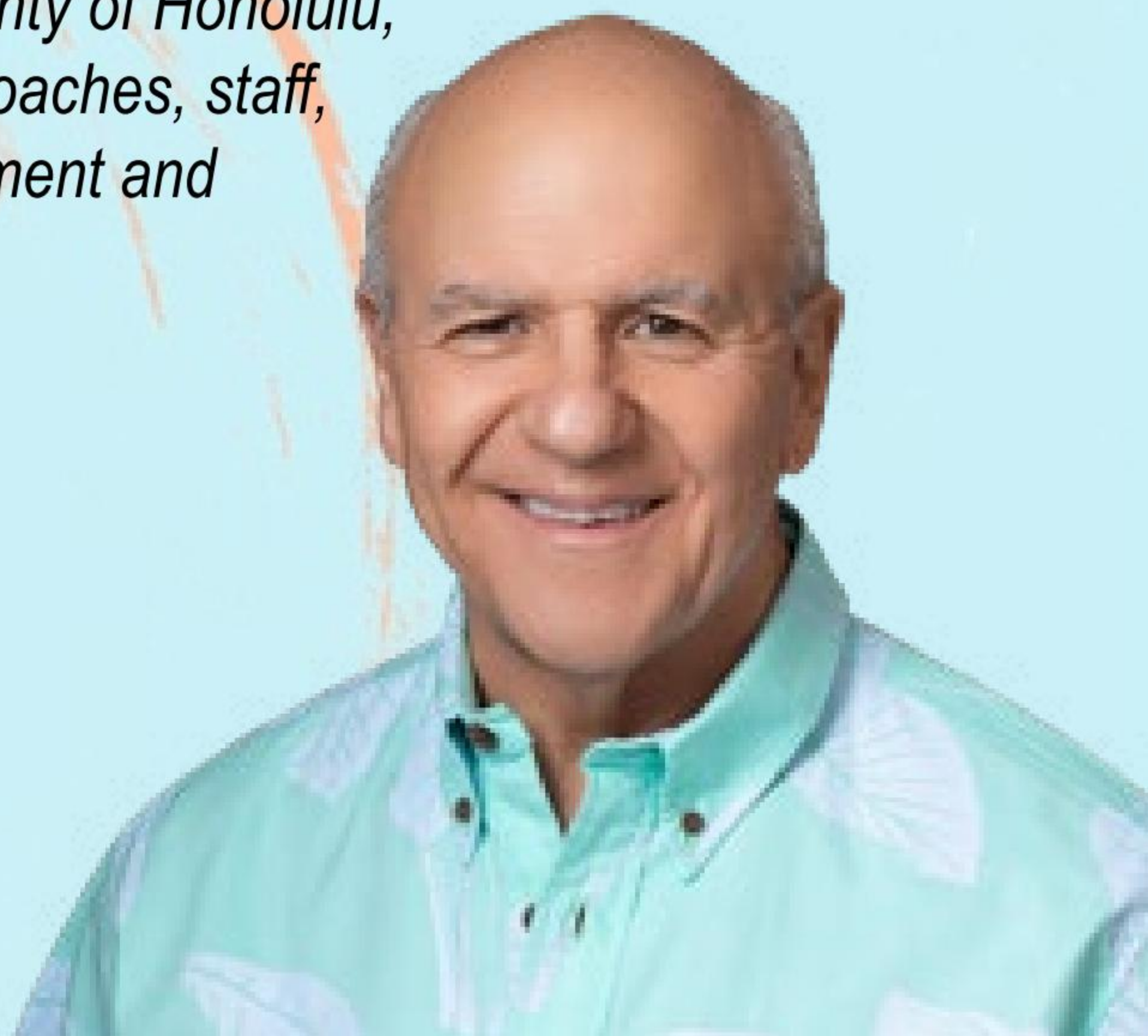
It gives me great pleasure to send my warmest aloha to everyone attending the 2024 Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic at the SimpliFi Arena at Stan Sheriff Center. I extend special greetings to all of our visiting friends and wish you an enjoyable stay here on O'ahu.

Now in its 15th year, the Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic has become an annual college basketball tradition during the holiday season, featuring an impressive lineup of Division I teams from major conferences across the country. Congratulations to this year's field: Charlotte, College of Charleston, Loyola Chicago, Murray State, Nebraska, Oakland, Oregon State and tournament host Hawai'i. We look forward to three days of exciting competition between these premier teams.

Mahalo to ESPN, Hawaiian Airlines, Outrigger Resorts & Hotels, Hawai'i Tourism Authority, the University of Hawai'i and other sponsors for presenting this much-anticipated tournament, which brings together basketball fans and families across the nation while showcasing the beautiful backdrop of our island home.

On behalf of the people of the City and County of Honolulu, I extend best wishes to all of the athletes, coaches, staff, families and fans for an outstanding tournament and successful season ahead.

Rick Blangiardi





SOME CANCER PATIENTS MUST TRAVEL FAR FROM HOME FOR TREATMENT.

The Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head coaches and their many supporters extend their heartfelt mahalo to everyone who joins them in the fight against cancer.

Together, we're raising thousands of dollars for the American Cancer Society Clarence T.C. Ching Hope Lodge in Honolulu. The Hope Lodge provides a home away from home for cancer patients and their caregivers who need to travel to O'ahu for treatment.

Please join Coaches vs. Cancer in supporting Hope Lodge Hawai'i by calling **1-800-227-2345** or visiting **cancer.org**.



Uniting to Fight Cancer in Hawai'i

In Hawai'i, where the sound of crashing waves meets the rhythm of basketballs bouncing, a unique tradition has emerged — one that combines the love of sports with an unwavering commitment to a noble cause. The Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic, the beloved holiday basketball tradition, has partnered with Coaches vs. Cancer to create an event that not only thrills fans but also makes a profound difference in the lives of those battling cancer in Hawai'i.

A NATIONWIDE MOVEMENT WITH LOCAL IMPACT

Coaches vs. Cancer is a nationwide initiative that began with a simple but powerful idea: mobilize the basketball community to fight cancer. Inspired by Norm Stewart, the head men's basketball coach at the University of Missouri and a cancer survivor, this movement has grown to encompass coaches, players, and fans who are dedicated to making a difference. The goal is clear—to raise awareness, promote early detection, and provide support to cancer patients and their families.

MORE THAN JUST A BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

The Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic, hosted by the University of Hawai'i since 2009, has evolved into much more than a basketball tournament. It's a platform for change, a stage where the spirit of competition is harnessed to combat a common enemy: cancer. Head coach Eran Ganot and his fellow coaches have joined forces, recognizing the power of their collective impact.

Each year, these coaches come together for a special fundraiser reception, creating a unique opportunity for fans to connect with their basketball heroes. At the Outrigger Reef Waikiki, fans can chat with the coaches, take pictures, and even bid on sports memorabilia. It's an event that celebrates the love of the game while channeling its energy towards a meaningful cause.

LOCAL INVOLVEMENT, LOCAL IMPACT

What sets this initiative apart is that all the funds raised stay right here in Hawai'i. The proceeds from the Coaches vs. Cancer fundraiser benefit the Clarence T. C. Ching Hope Lodge, a haven for neighbor island cancer patients and their caregivers during their treatment in Honolulu. This means your contribution directly supports the local community, making a tangible difference in the lives of those affected by cancer in our beautiful islands.

The dedication of local volunteers and organizers also amplifies the event's impact. From planning the tournament to engaging fans and raising awareness, these individuals play a vital role in uniting the community for this important cause. Their commitment ensures that the Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic remains a force for good in Hawai'i.

Cancer is a battle that touches us all, directly or indirectly. It knows no boundaries and doesn't discriminate. By supporting Coaches vs. Cancer and the Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic, you're not just attending a basketball event; you're becoming part of a movement that's working tirelessly to improve the lives of our friends and neighbors.

HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Getting involved is easy, and there are multiple ways to make a difference:

- 1. Plan to Attend Next Year's Meet & Greet:** Join the annual fundraiser reception during the Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic. Connect with coaches, share your passion for basketball, and contribute to the cause.
- 2. Direct Donation:** If you prefer a straightforward way to contribute, you can make a direct donation to the local Coaches vs. Cancer efforts by visiting

HawaiiBowlFoundation.org/make-a-donation

Your participation, no matter how big or small, helps raise awareness, fund critical cancer research, and support patients in their journey towards recovery. Together, we can create a future where cancer no longer holds power over our loved ones



Rebound

Take a fast break – or an extended time out – at a breathtaking OUTRIGGER resort or hotel here in Hawai'i or throughout the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean. **Game on.**

Proud Sponsor of the 2024 Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic

O'AHU MAUI KAUA'I HAWAI'I ISLAND FIJI THAILAND MAURITIUS MALDIVES

OUTRIGGER.
RESORTS & HOTELS



Scan here or visit
OUTRIGGER.COM





A MESSAGE FROM
GOVERNOR JOSH GREEN, M.D.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 15th Annual Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic Tournament. This event has become a cherished tradition in our community, showcasing Division I collegiate basketball talent against the stunning backdrop of our beautiful islands.

For fifteen years, this tournament has not only provided thrilling sportsmanship, but also brought together athletes, families, and fans from across the nation to experience the warmth and hospitality that Hawai'i is known for. We are proud to host this celebration of athletic excellence and community spirit.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Hawaiian Airlines for their continued support and partnership in making this event possible. Their commitment to fostering sports and community engagement is truly commendable.

To the participating teams and their fans, mahalo for joining us. We wish you the best of luck and hope you create unforgettable memories both on and off the court.

With Aloha,

Josh Green M.D.



Time to

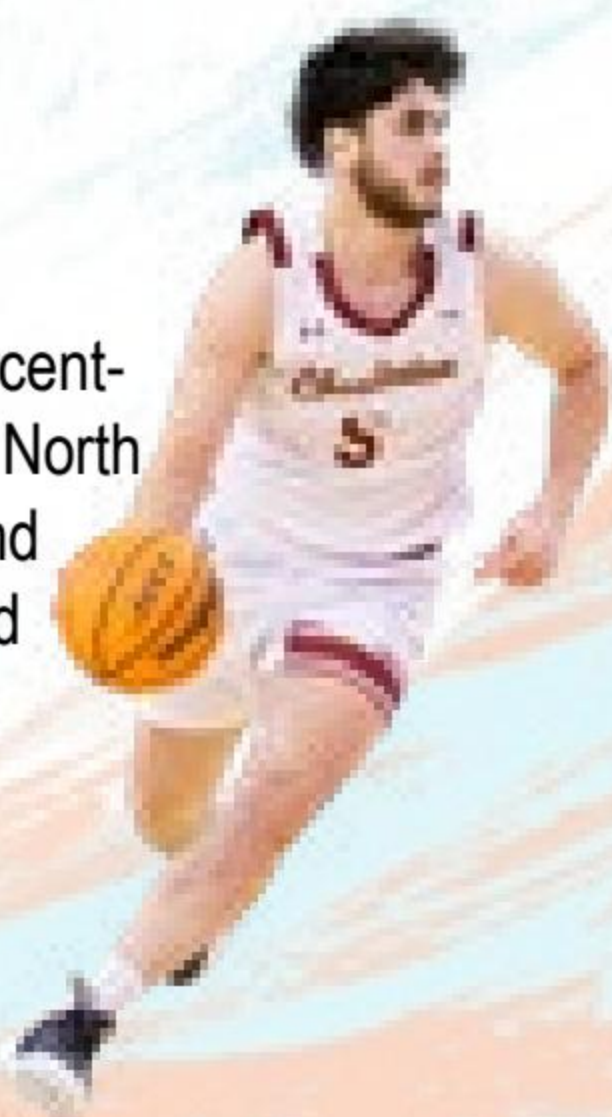


A warm aloha and welcome to all players, coaches, and fans as we lei up for the Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic. This year's event brings together top collegiate basketball teams, featuring players from across the nation and around the globe, making it a true celebration of talent, culture, and thrilling hoops action.



Charleston: All-Time Winners

Charleston's 69% all time winning percentage sits only behind Kentucky (76%), North Carolina (73.4%), Kansas (72.9%), and Duke (71.2%). UCLA (68.8%), UNLV (68.5%), and Syracuse (68.2%) follow the Cougars.



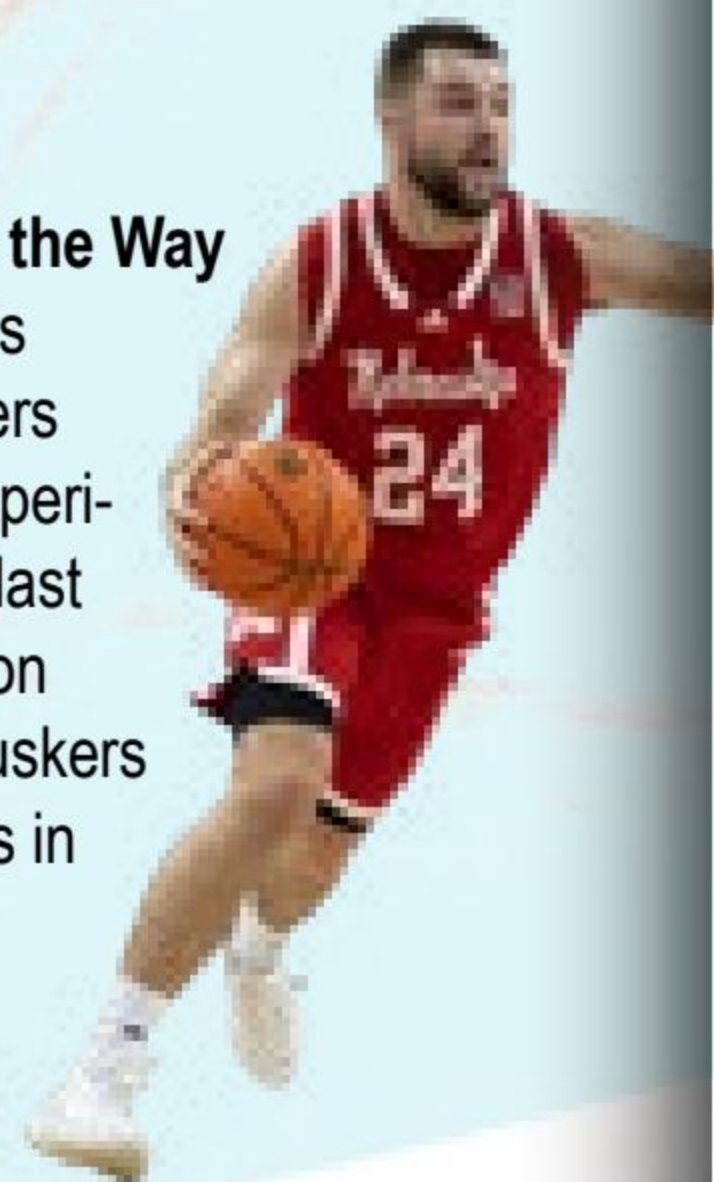
Murray State: Racing Into Tradition

Murray State is the only US school to run a real racehorse with a jockey around the track after scoring a touchdown. The tradition began in 1976, when a thoroughbred horse first made a lap around the Roy Stewart Stadium track after a Racer touchdown.



Nebraska: Veteran Roster Leads the Way

Nebraska boasts one of the nation's oldest rosters, with nine of 17 players having at least three seasons of experience. Juwan Gary, Brice Williams, and Rienk Mast are in their sixth year, while Braxton Meah, Ahron Ulis, and Rolie Worster begin their fifth. The Huskers are one of 10 programs with six or more players in their fifth year or beyond.



Charlotte: The Original Cinderella Story

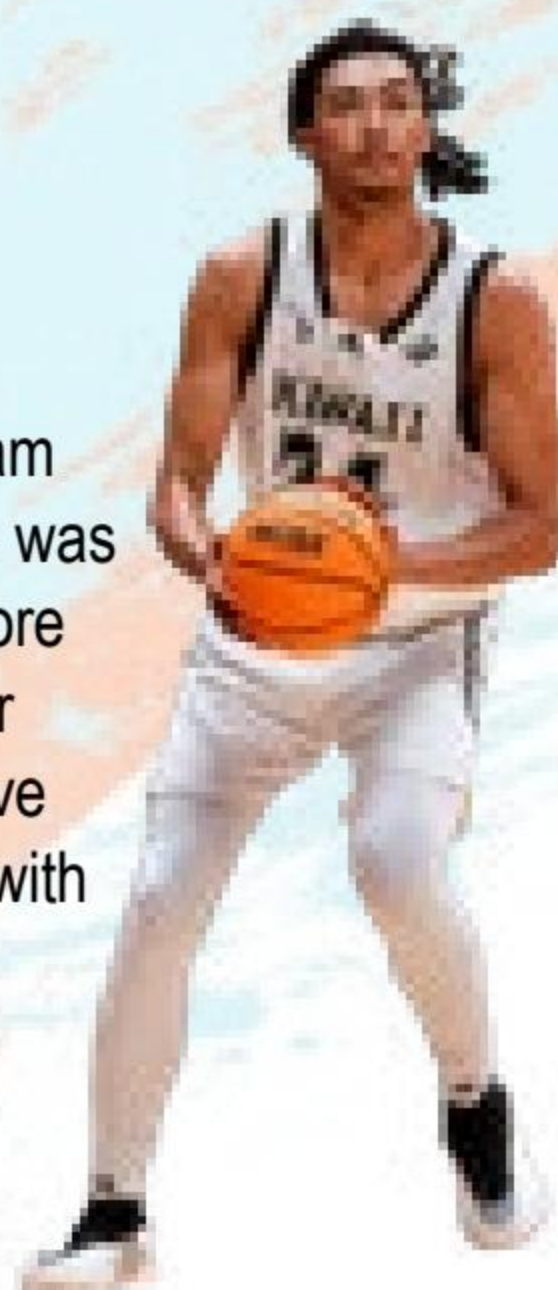
Charlotte became the NCAA Tournament's original Cinderella in 1977. In just their seventh Division I season, the 49ers made their debut tournament appearance and reached the Final Four, defeating Syracuse and 1976 finalist Michigan. They remain the only team to reach the Final Four in their first NCAA Tournament.



Hawai'i: Olympic Trailblazer



Forward Akira Jacobs is coming off a summer in which he competed for Team Japan in the 2024 Paris Olympics. He was the first UH basketball Olympian in more than 50 years, joining Tom Henderson who played for Team USA in 1972. He was also one of only two active NCAA players who competed in the Olympics along with Duke's Khaman Maluach (South Sudan).



Oakland: Kampe's Legendary Tenure

Golden Grizzlies head coach Greg Kampe, in his 41st season, is the longest-tenured active D1 coach at one school. Leading since 1984, he ranks top three in wins among active D1 coaches and has 11 more seasons than Tom Izzo, the second-most tenured coach.



Oregon State: Tinkle Family Hoops Legacy

Head coach Wayne Tinkle has a basketball-centric family, as his wife Lisa (Montana) and three children - Joslyn (Stanford), Ellie (Gonzaga) and Tres (Oregon State) all played college basketball. Joslyn is now an assistant coach for the Pepperdine women's basketball team, while Tres is continuing his professional career in Turkey.



Loyola: The Big Turnaround

In 2023-2024, Loyola achieved a remarkable turnaround, improving their win total by 12 games from the previous season. The Ramblers finished with a 23-10 overall record and a 15-3 mark in Atlantic 10 Conference play, earning a share of the regular-season title and securing a bid to the National Invitation Tournament.



The Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic brings together a vibrant mix of college basketball's best. From rising stars to seasoned players, local standouts to international talents, these teams are set to compete in the true spirit of aloha. Get ready for thrilling hoops action in our island paradise. Mahalo, and let the games begin!



KEEP doing
what you
LOVE.

Courtesy: Jarin Kobashigawa

What drives you? What's your passion?

We're here with personalized health care designed
to help you live your life, your way.

HawaiiPacificHealth.org/HealthierLife

**HAWAII'
PACIFIC
HEALTH**

KAPI'OLANI
PALI MOMI
STRAUB BENIOFF
WILCOX

CREATING A HEALTHIER HAWAII'

HAWAII' PACIFIC HEALTH IS THE OFFICIAL HEALTH CARE PARTNER OF THE HAWAIIAN AIRLINES DIAMOND HEAD CLASSIC.

ZIPPY'S
ZIPSTER
REWARDS

**FREE CHILI
WITH RICE***

**AFTER YOUR FIRST PURCHASE
AS A ZIPSTER REWARDS MEMBER**

**SCAN TO DOWNLOAD
THE ZIPPY'S APP**



*Regular Chili with Rice (take out)/Chili with Rice (restaurant), subject to the terms and conditions of the Zipster Rewards program.



GAME 1
Sun, 12/22
10am HST



GAME 5
Mon, 12/23
Time 12:30pm HST

GAME 6
Mon, 12/23
Time 3pm HST



GAME 2
Sun, 12/22
Noon HST*



GAME 10
Wed, 12/25
8:30am or 10:30am HST*

CHAMPIONSHIP
Wed, 12/25
3:30pm HST*



GAME 3
Sun, 12/22
4pm HST



GAME 8
Mon, 12/23
7:30pm HST*

GAME 7
Mon, 12/23
5:30pm HST



GAME 4
Sun, 12/22
6:30pm HST*



GAME 9
Wed, 12/25
8:30am or 10:30am HST*

GAME 11
Wed, 12/25
1:30pm HST



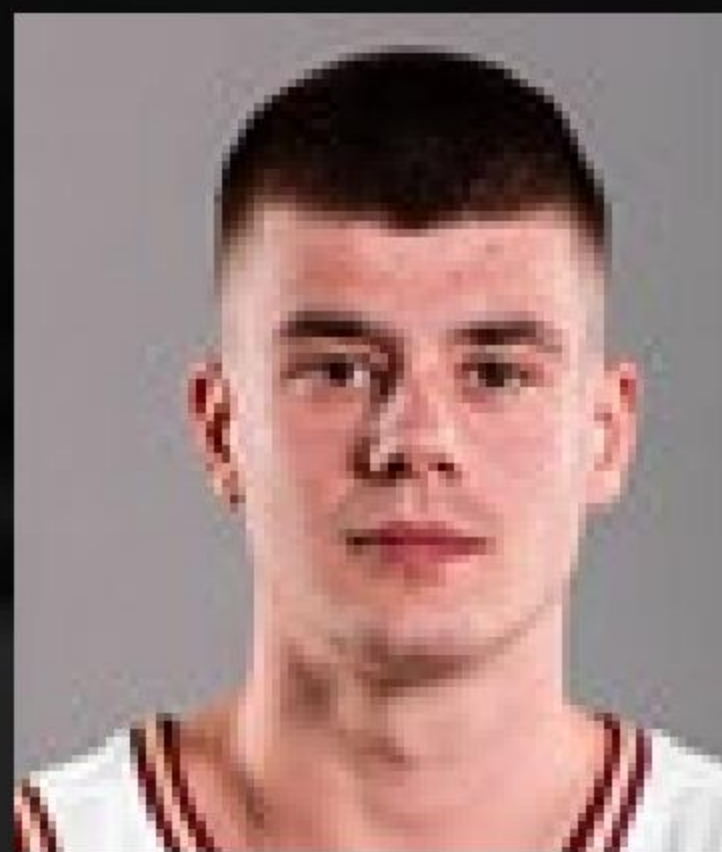
Derrin Boyd



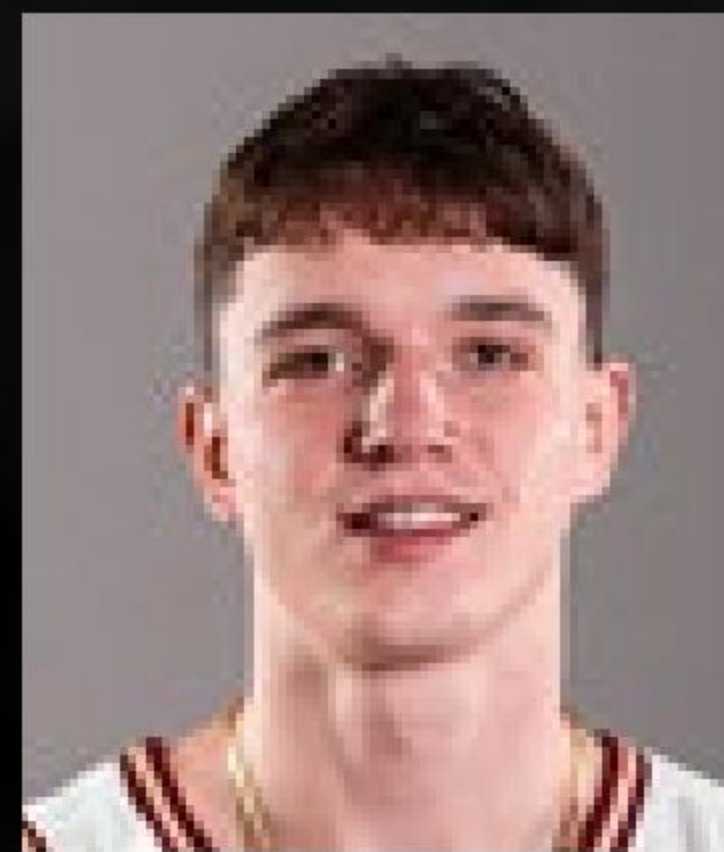
Ante Brzovic



Adam Comer



Djordje Curcic



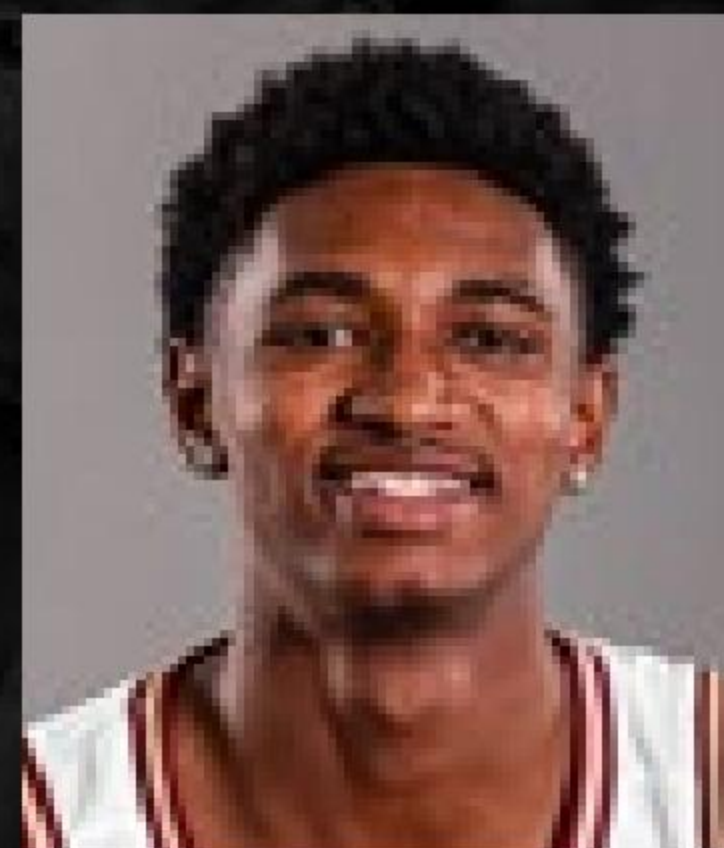
Lazar Djokovic



CJ Fulton



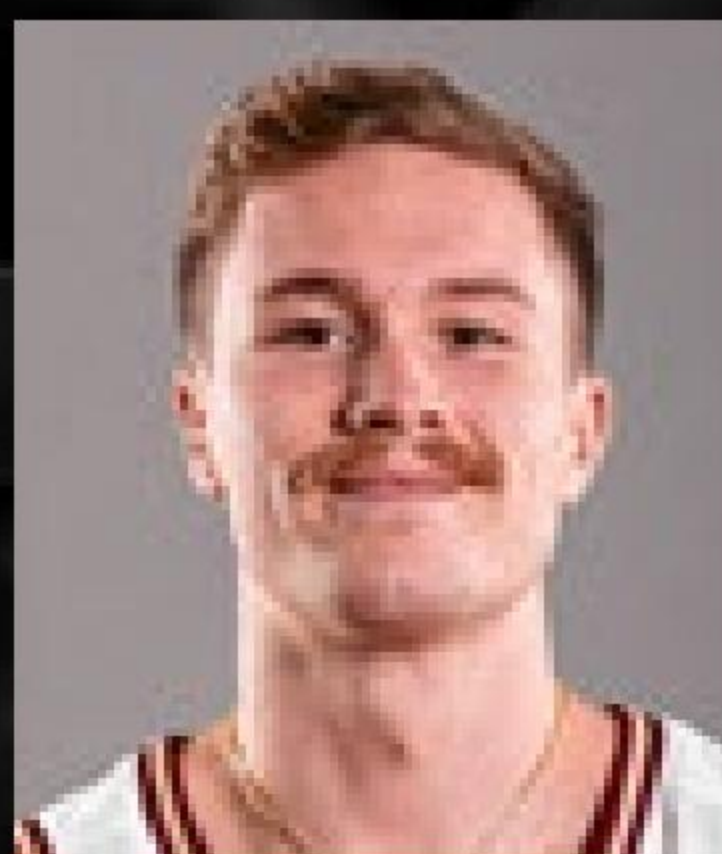
Cade Higgins



Elijah Jones



Evan Kilminster



Jack Miller



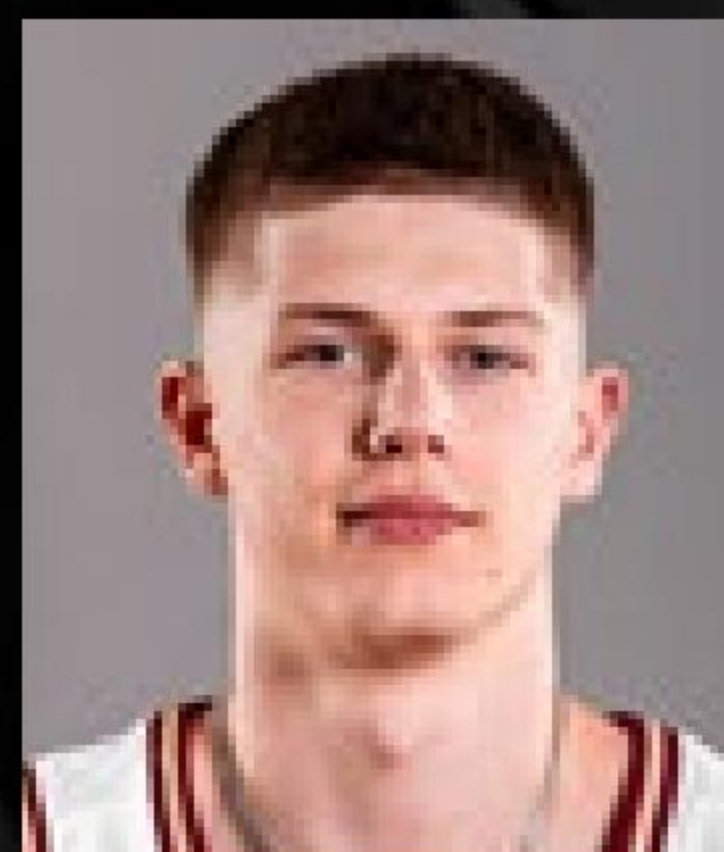
Jaxon Prunty



Joey Scarpitti



AJ Smith



Justas Stonkus



Deywilk Tavaréz



Stef van Bussel

CHARLESTON

Nickname: Cougars
Colors: Maroon and White

NCAA
Tournament
Appearances

7

NIT
Tournament
Appearances

6



2023-2024 Record

27-8



COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH
Chris Mack

ASSOCIATE COACH
Chris Harriman

ASSISTANT COACH
Jeremy Growe

ASSISTANT COACH
Jeff McInnis

ASSISTANT COACH
Christen Cunningham

ASSISTANT COACH
Tre Campbell

2024-2025 Roster

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	YR.	HOMETOWN / PREVIOUS SCHOOL
0	Jaxon Prunty	G	6-6	190	Fr.	Charlotte, NC / Lexington - SC
1	AJ Smith	G	6-5	210	Jr.	Charlotte, NC / The Citadel
3	Elijah Jones	F	6-7	210	Sr.	South Holland, IL / Green Bay
4	Derrin Boyd	G	6-3	215	Gr.	Princeton, KY / Lipscomb
5	Deywilk Tavarez	G	6-2	185	So.	Pennsauken, NJ / Delaware State
6	CJ Fulton	G	6-3	190	Sr.	Belfast, Ireland / (Lafayette
7	Evan Kilminster	G	6-3	190	R-So.	Newcastle, Australia / Australian Institute of Sport
8	Justas Stonkus	G	6-6	210	Fr.	Plunge, Lithuania
10	Ante Brzovic	F	6-10	225	Sr.	Zagreb, Croatia / Southeastern OK State
14	Cade Higgins	G	6-4	195	Fr.	Fort Worth, TX / IMG Academy
15	Stef van Bussel	F	6-10	225	So.	Ommel, Netherlands / St. Louis
17	Lazar Djokovic	F	6-11	235	So.	Gornji Milanovac, Serbia / Xavier
31	Jack Miller	G	6-0	180	Sr.	Ocean Township, NJ / Brewster Academy
33	Joey Scarpitti	G	5-11	170	Fr.	Cleveland, OH / St. Edward
44	Djordje Curcic	G	6-3	190	So.	Cacak, Serbia / St. Louis
50	Adam Comer	F	6-9	225	Sr.	Broome, SC / Broome

PLAYER TO WATCH: ANTE BRZOVIC

Ante Brzovic earned a spot on the 2023-24 All-CAA First Team and NABC All-District 10 First Team. Already named the 2024-25 Blue Ribbon CAA Preseason Player of the Year, the Croatian big man scored 20-plus points on three occasions last year including a career-high 31 at Hampton. Averaging 12.1 points per game and 6.3 rebounds per game last season, he scored double figures in 22 contests including five double-doubles. He was a unanimous All-CAA Preseason First Team selection.



Andrew Bailey



Kyran Blackmon



Ben Bradford



Robert Braswell IV



Tyler Fearn



Isaiah Folkes



Nik Graves



Nika Metskhvarishvili



Jeremiah Oden



Dean Reiber



Nick Richart



Rich Rolf



Giancarlo Rosado



Aleks Szymczyk



Jaehshon Thomas





NCAA
Tournament
Appearances

11

NIT
Tournament
Appearances

7

2023-2024 Record

19-12

2024-2025 Roster

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	YR.	HOMETOWN / PREVIOUS SCHOOL
1	Giancarlo Rosado	F	6-8	240	Gr.	West Palm Beach, FL / Florida Atlantic
2	Andrew Bailey	F	6-6	210	So.	Ramstein, Germany / SV Boeblingen
3	Ben Bradford	G	6-5	200	Fr.	Gaithersburg, MD / Gaithersburg HS
5	Isaiah Folkes	G	6-4	200	Sr.	Gainesville, VA / Middleburg Academy HS
7	Kylan Blackmon	G	6-3	200	R-Sr.	Oxford, MS / Coastal Carolina
10	Nik Graves	G	6-3	195	Jr.	Durham, NC / Greensboro Day School
11	Aleks Szymczyk	F	6-10	250	R-So.	Frankfurt, Germany / Florida
20	Robert Braswell IV	F	6-7	210	Gr.	Jacksonville, FL / Syracuse
21	Dean Reiber	F	6-10	235	R-Sr.	Greensboro, NC / Rutgers
22	Jaehshon Thomas	G	6-3	195	Jr.	Aurora, IL / Florida Southwestern State
24	Rich Rolf	F	6-7	210	R-So.	Centerville, OH / Centerville HS
25	Jeremiah Oden	F	6-9	215	R-Sr.	Chicago, IL / DePaul / Wyoming
31	Nick Richart	F	6-10	235	R-Fr.	Zionsville, IN / Zionsville HS
35	Tyler Fearne	G	6-6	190	R-Jr.	Cairns, Australia / Concord Academy
77	Nika Metskhvarishvili	F	6-8	225	Gr.	Tbilisi, Georgia / UL-Monroe

CHARLOTTE

Nickname: 49ers

Colors: Green and White

COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH
Aaron Fearne

ASSISTANT COACH
Vic Sfera

ASSISTANT COACH
Kevin Smith

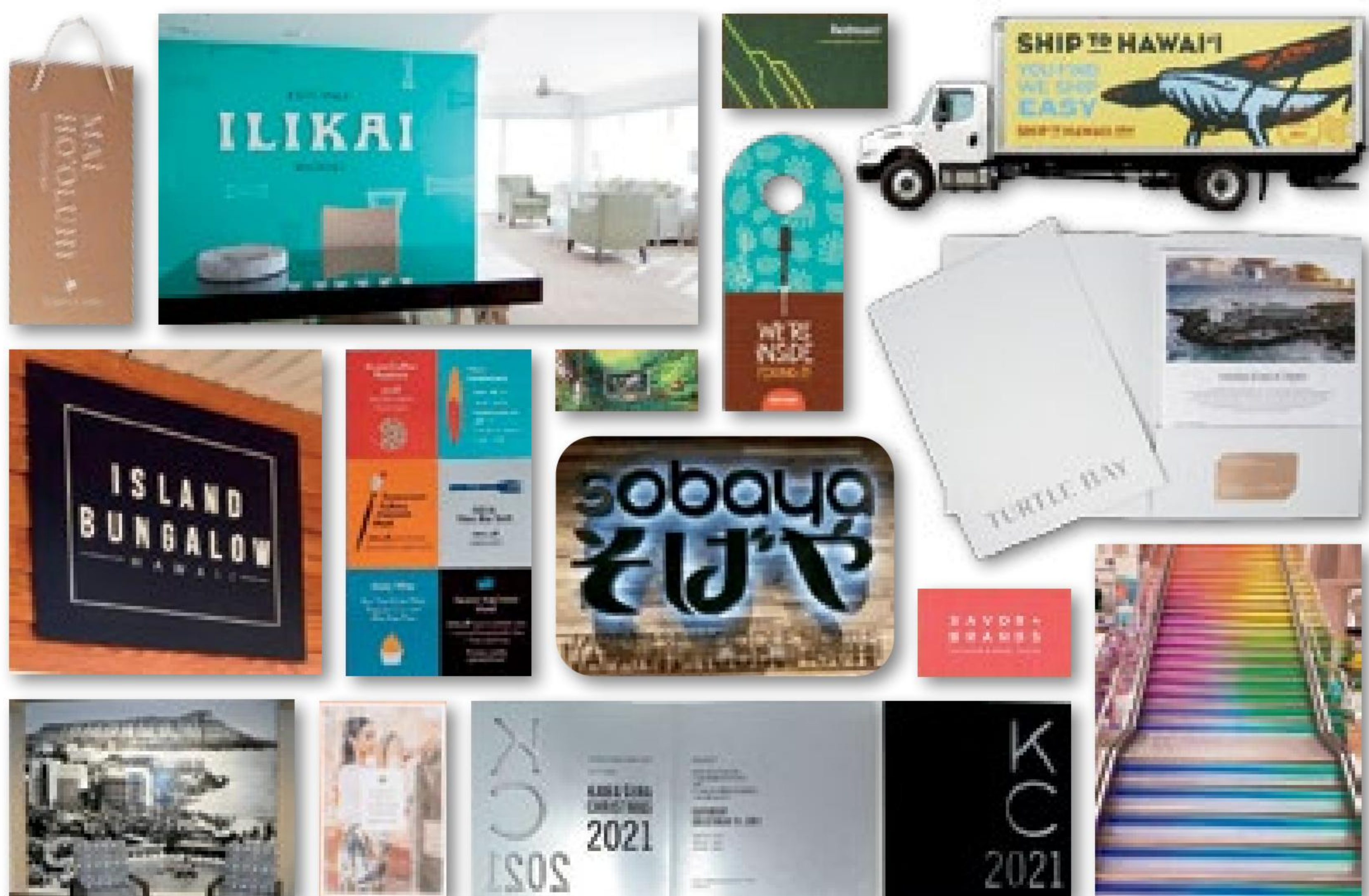
ASSISTANT COACH
Ben Johnson

PLAYER TO WATCH: NIK GRAVES

Nik Graves enters the 2024-25 season as Charlotte's top returning player, building on an impressive sophomore campaign. A dynamic guard and Durham, N.C. native, Graves demonstrated his all-around skillset last season by leading the team with 85 assists and ranking second in steals with 30. On November 13, 2024, he delivered a career-best performance with 23 points and seven rebounds in a dominant 65-48 victory over Richmond. As the son of Niner legend Nikki Graves—an all-time great and 1,000-point scorer for Charlotte—Nik is continuing the family legacy in Green & White. Keep an eye on this Greensboro Day School product as he takes his game to new heights this season.



ACTUAL JOBS. **JUST NOT ACTUAL SIZE.**



Hawaii's Most Comprehensive
 Print Solutions Company

HONBLUE



MAUI
BREWING CO

MAUI
HARD SELTZER

BREWED *with* **ALOHA**



VISIT MAUI BREWING CO. RESTAURANTS

MAUI: KIHEI • KAHANA • KĀ'ANAPALI
O'AHU: KAILUA • WAIKĪKĪ

MAUIBREWING.COM | @MAUIBREWINGCO



Tom Beattie



Tanner Christensen



AJ Economou



Marcus Greene



Aaron Hunkin-Claytor



Roy Igwe



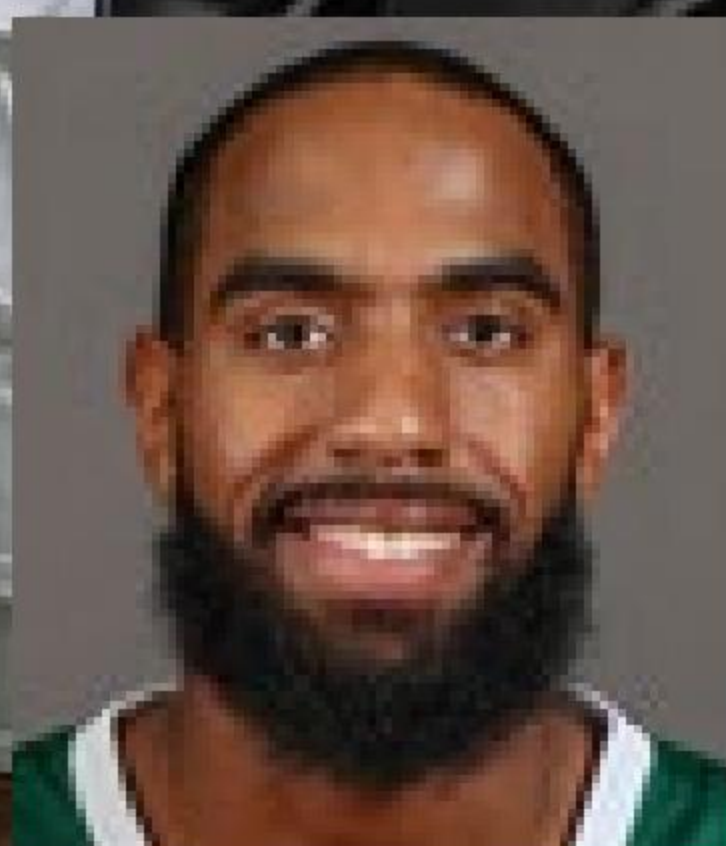
Akira Jacobs



Gytis Nemeikša



Osahon Obasohan



Jerome Palm



Ryan Rapp



Logan Robeson



Harry Rouhliadeff



Jacopo Van der Knaap



Kody Williams

HAWAII

Nickname: Rainbow Warriors
Colors: Green and Black

NCAA
Tournament
Appearances

5

NIT
Tournament
Appearances

8



2023-2024 Record

20-14



COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH
Eran Ganot

ASSOCIATE COACH
Brad Davidson

ASSISTANT COACH
Rob Jones

ASSISTANT COACH
Gibson Johnson

ASSISTANT COACH
Cullen Neal

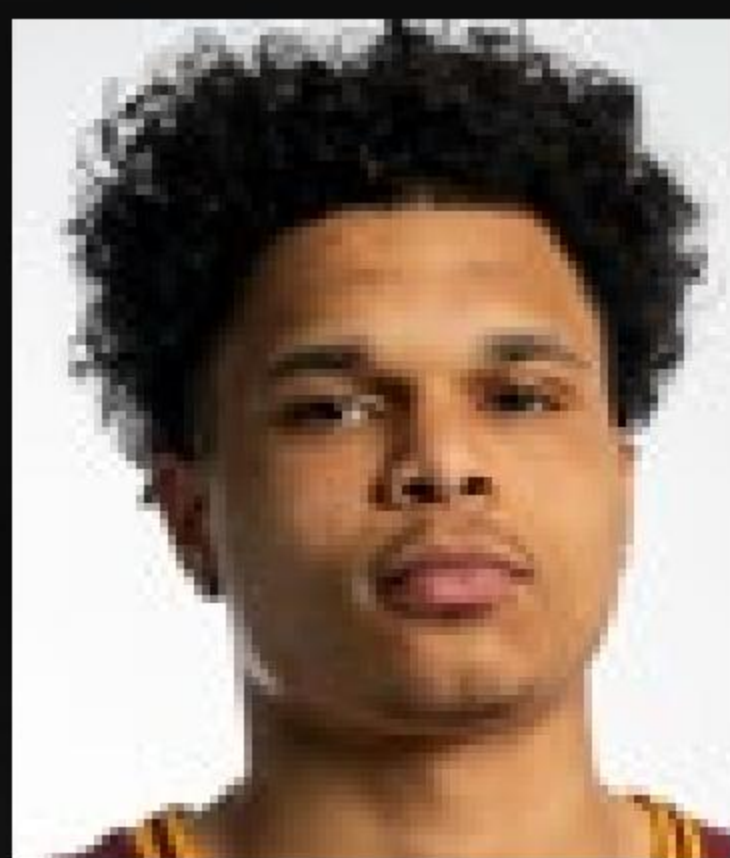
PLAYER TO WATCH: TANNER CHRISTENSEN

A standout graduate transfer, Tanner made an immediate impact in his debut for the Rainbow Warriors, earning the title of Most Outstanding Player in the OUTRIGGER Rainbow Classic. Averaging 15.0 points, 7.3 rebounds, and shooting an impressive 70 percent from the field, Christensen led Hawai'i to its first Classic title in seven years. Before joining the Rainbow Warriors, he built a solid four-year career at Idaho and Utah Tech, playing in 113 games with 93 starts. Over the last two seasons at Utah Tech, he started all 63 games, averaging 11.5 points, 6.8 rebounds, and 48 blocks while shooting 56.4 percent. A unique journey shaped by a two-year church mission in Argentina prior to college, Christensen brings leadership, skill, and dedication to Hawai'i's lineup.

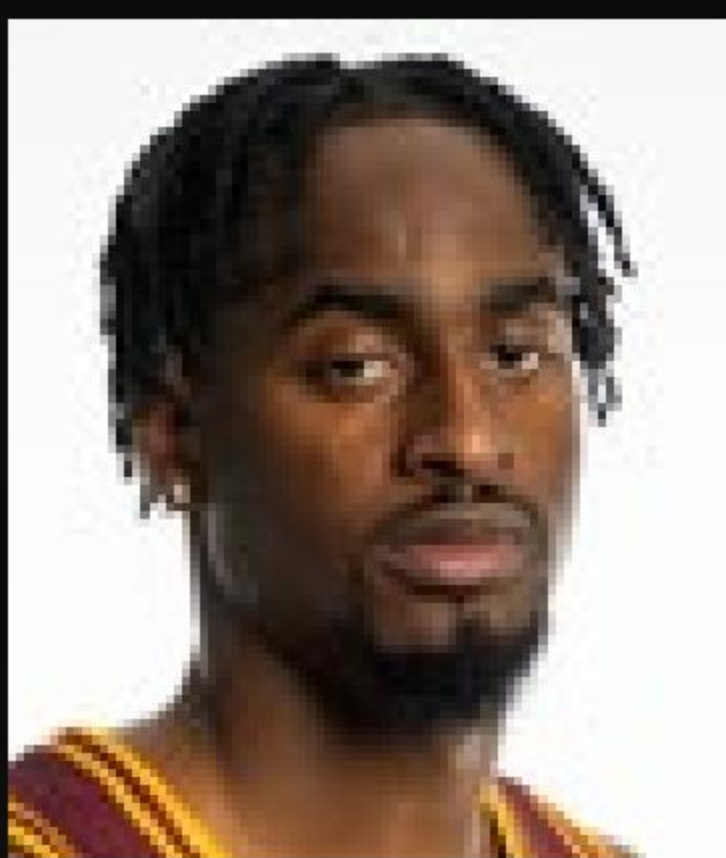
2024-2025 Roster

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	YR.	HOMETOWN / PREVIOUS SCHOOL
0	Kody Williams	G	6-0	190	Jr.	Minnetonka, MN / South Kent HS
2	Tom Beattie	G	6-4	195	So.	Auckland, New Zealand / Rosmini College
4	Marcus Greene	G	6-2	175	Sr.	Gilroy, CA / Houston Christian
5	Gytis Nemeikša	F	6-8	220	Sr.	Kaunas, Lithuania / Xavier
6	Osahon Obasohan	G	6-4	210	So.	Antwerp, Belgium / Espoirs Le Mans
8	AJ Economou	G	6-5	180	Fr.	Santa Monica, CA / Southern California Academy
10	Logan Robeson	G	6-3	190	Fr.	Moraga, CA / Campolindo HS
11	Jacopo Van der Knaap	G	6-5	200	Fr.	Verona, Italy / Tobarra CB
13	Roy Igwe	F	6-7	225	Fr.	Tokyo, Japan / St. Mary's International School
14	Harry Rouhliadef	F	6-9	230	Jr.	Brisbane, Australia / Villanova College
20	Jerome Palm	F/C	6-10	225	Gr.	Almere, Netherlands / Valparaiso
22	Ryan Rapp	G	6-5	185	Sr.	Melbourne, Australia / Washington State
30	Aaron Hunkin-Claytor	G	6-2	165	Fr.	Wahiawa, HI / Salesian Prep
32	Tanner Christensen	C	6-10	265	Gr.	Spokane Valley, WA / Utah Tech
34	Akira Jacobs	F	6-10	220	So.	Yokohama, Japan / NBA Global Academy





Jayden Dawson



Jalen DeLoach



Sheldon Edwards Jr.



Daniil Glazkov



Seifeldin Hendawy



Kymany Houinsou



Justin Moore



Matthew Mortenson



Francis Nwaokorie



Jalen Quinn



Caleb Reese



Zachary Royster



Miles Rubin



Jack Turner



Des Watson



Brayden Young



Sam Yurasek

LOYOLA

Nickname: Ramblers
Colors: Maroon and Gold

NCAA
Tournament
Appearances

8

NIT
Tournament
Appearances

6



2023-2024 Record

23-10

COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH
Drew Valentine

ASSOCIATE HEAD COACH
Sean Dwyer

ASSISTANT COACH
Justin Bradley

ASSISTANT COACH
Keith Clemons

ASSISTANT COACH
Andrew Cobian

ASSISTANT COACH
Chris Huey



PLAYER TO WATCH: MILES RUBIN

Miles Rubin is a dominant force for Loyola Chicago, entering the 2024-25 season as a Preseason All-Third Team and All-Defensive Team selection in the A-10. Known for his elite shot-blocking ability, Rubin shattered a 40-year-old program record with 76 blocks last season, leading the nation by rejecting 14.1% of opponent attempts. He tied Loyola's single-game block record with six swats against La Salle and posted eight games with at least four blocks. Adding to his impact, Rubin showcased his all-around game with a double-double (11 points, 11 rebounds) at VCU. A cornerstone of Loyola's defense, Rubin's ability to anchor the paint makes him one to watch this season.

2024-2025 Roster

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	YR.	HOMETOWN / PREVIOUS SCHOOL
0	Des Watson	G	6-5	210	Jr.	Columbus, OH / Davidson
1	Jayden Dawson	G	6-4	195	So.	Omaha, NE / Omaha Central
2	Jalen Quinn	G	6-3	195	So.	Tuscola, IL / Tuscola
4	Jalen DeLoach	F	6-9	225	Sr.	Savannah, GA / Georgia
5	Daniil Glazkov	G	6-6	205	Fr.	Krasnodar, Russia / IMG Academy
8	Justin Moore	G	6-3	185	Jr.	Philadelphia, PA / Drexel
9	Seifeldin Hendawy	G	6-8	200	Fr.	Cairo, Egypt / NBA Academy Africa
10	Jack Turner	G	6-3	165	Fr.	Los Angeles, CA / St. John Bosco
13	Sheldon Edwards Jr.	G	6-4	190	Sr.	West Palm Beach, FL / Valparaiso
14	Caleb Reese	G	5-11	160	So.	Warren, MI / De La Salle
22	Sam Yurasek	G	6-3	165	Fr.	Napa, CA / Prolific Prep
24	Miles Rubin	C	6-10	205	Fr.	Chicago, IL / Simeon
28	Kymany Houinsou	G	6-7	205	Jr.	Mulhouse, France / Washington State
30	Brayden Young	F	6-9	195	Fr.	Houston, TX / Cypress Falls
31	Zachary Royster	F	6-7	220	Fr.	Chicago, IL / Lindblom
34	Matthew Mortenson	F	6-4	215	Fr.	Plano, TX / IMG Academy FL
35	Francis Nwaokorie	F	6-7	220	Dr.	Brooklyn Park, MN / UC San Diego





TOURNAMENT HISTORY

All-Time Champions



YEAR	CHAMPION	RUNNER-UP	SCORE	TOURNAMENT MVP
2009	USC	UNLV	67-56	Mike Gerrity, USC
2010	Butler	Washington State	84-68	Matt Howard, Butler
2011	Kansas State	Long Beach State	77-60	Rodney McGruder, Kansas State
2012	Arizona	San Diego State	68-67	Solomon Hill, Arizona
2013	Iowa State	Boise State	70-66	Deandre Kane, Iowa State
2014	George Washington	Wichita State	60-54	Kevin Larsen, George Washington
2015	Oklahoma	Harvard	83-70	Buddy Hield, Oklahoma
2016	San Diego State	San Francisco	62-48	Zylan Cheatham, San Diego State
2017	USC	New Mexico State	77-72	Bennie Boatwright, USC
2018	TCU	Indiana State	83-68	Alex Robinson, TCU
2019	Houston	Washington	75-71	Fabian White, Houston
2020		No tournament due to COVID pandemic		
2021	Vanderbilt*	Stanford	-	Darius McGhee, Liberty
2022	Hawai'i	SMU	58-57	JoVon McClanahan, Hawai'i
2023	Nevada	Georgia Tech	72-64	Jarod Lucas Nevada



*Game canceled due to COVID issues; Vanderbilt awarded tournament trophy.

INDIVIDUAL RECORDS

MOST POINTS SCORED

GAME: 41 Darius McGhee, Liberty vs. Stanford, 2021
41 Chase Fischer, BYU vs. New Mexico, 2015
TOURNAMENT: 92 Darius McGhee, Liberty, 2021

MOST ASSISTS

GAME: 12 Jimmy Sotos, Bucknell vs. UNLV, 2018
TOURNAMENT: 26 Alex Robinson, TCU, 2018

MOST FREE THROWS MADE

GAME: 16 Dwain Williams, Hawai'i vs. Saint Mary's, 2009
TOURNAMENT: 29 Roberto Nelson, Oregon State, 2013

MOST BLOCKED SHOTS

GAME: 7 David Foster, Utah vs. Butler, 2010
TOURNAMENT: 12 David Foster, Utah, 2010

MOST POINTS SCORED

GAME: 111, TCU vs. Old Dominion, 2023
TOURNAMENT: 262, BYU, 2015

HIGHEST FIELD-GOAL PERCENTAGE

GAME: .604 Hawai'i (29-48) vs. College of Charleston, 2009
TOURNAMENT: .524 Utah, 2016

MOST 3-POINT FIELD GOALS MADE

GAME: 9 Chase Fischer, BYU vs. New Mexico, 2015
TOURNAMENT: 15 Darius McGhee, Liberty (36 att.), 2021

MOST REBOUNDS

GAME: 17 Zigmars Raimo, Hawai'i vs. Colorado, 2018;
Zena Edosomwan, Harvard vs. BYU, 2015
TOURNAMENT: 39 Zena Edosomwan, Harvard, 2015

MOST STEALS

GAME: 6, Frankie Ferrari, San Francisco vs. San Diego State, 2016; Shane Larkin, Miami vs. Arizona, 2012;
Jason Wade, Old Dominion vs. UMass, 2023
TOURNAMENT: 10 Zigmars Raimo, Hawai'i 2019;
Shane Larkin, Miami, 2012

MOST 3-POINT FIELD GOALS MADE

GAME: 16 San Francisco vs. Utah, 2016; BYU vs. New Mexico, 2015
TOURNAMENT: 36 Liberty (84 att.), 2021

LARGEST MARGIN OF VICTORY

GAME: 33 Baylor vs. San Diego (83-50), 2010



Gifts that celebrate Hawaii's beauty & aloha

For over 45 years, we've made cookies, chocolates and confections by hand, using only the finest ingredients.

Ala Moana Center, Street Level 1, Center Court - Oahu

Hilo Factory & Retail Gift Shop - 585 Hinano Street - Hilo, Hawaii

BigIslandCandies.com

CANDIES
BIG ISLAND
ESTABLISHED 1977



Alden Applewhite



Trey Boggess



Patrick Chew



Tre Davis



Nick Ellington



AJ Ferguson



Terence Harcum



KyeRon Lindsay



John McCrear



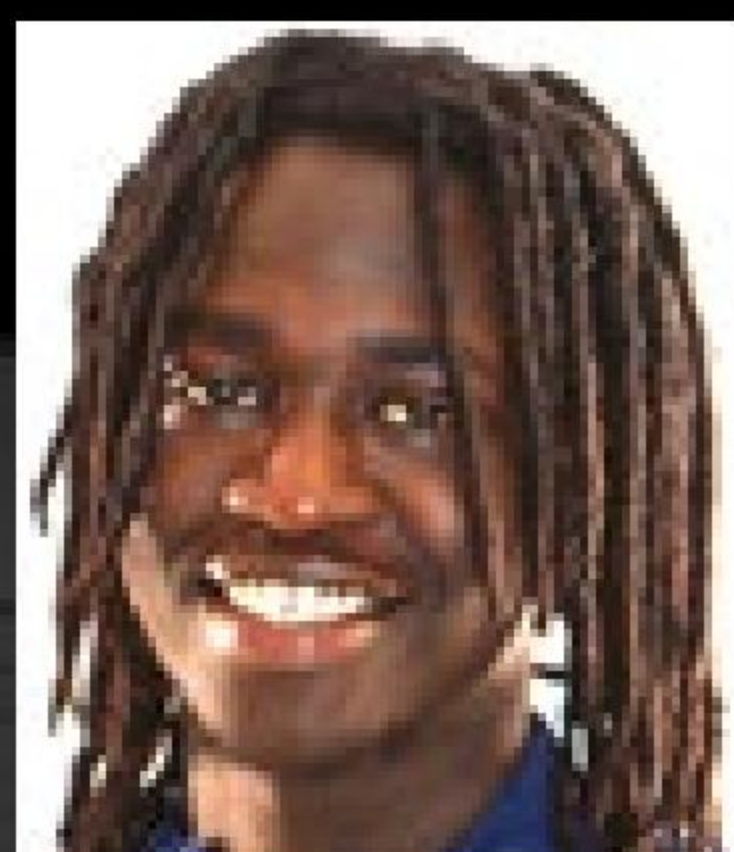
Jordan McCullum



Kylen Milton



Justin Morgan



Chiang Ring



Mason Shubert



JaCobi Wood



MURRAY STATE

Nickname: Racers
Colors: Navy and Gold

NCAA
Tournament
Appearances

18

NIT
Tournament
Appearances

8



2023-2024 Record

12-20



COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH
Steve Prohm

ASSISTANT COACH
Cole Christian

ASSISTANT COACH
Antwon Jackson

ASSISTANT COACH
Brendan Mullins

ASSISTANT COACH
Bryan Sherrer

ASSISTANT COACH
T.J. Sapp

PLAYER TO WATCH: JACOBI WOOD

A standout for the Racers since joining in 2022, the dynamic guard JaCobi Wood made an immediate impact, starting all 32 games in his first season and earning MVC Newcomer of the Week honors. At the Myrtle Beach Invitational, he delivered back-to-back career-high scoring performances and narrowly missed a triple-double in the third-place game. A 1,000-point scorer between Murray State and Belmont, he's shown a knack for clutch moments, including a game-winning 3-pointer against Evansville. This season, he continues to impress with highlights like 13 assists against Maryland Eastern Shore and 17 points in the season opener vs. Bethel.

2024-2025 Roster

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	YR.	HOMETOWN / PREVIOUS SCHOOL
0	Kylen Milton	G	6-4	195	Sr.	Monticello, AK / Pine Bluff
2	KyeRon Lindsay	F	6-8	220	Jr.	Denton, TX / Texas Tech
4	Patrick Chew	G	6-3	185	R-So.	Phoenix, AZ / Brophy College Prep HS
7	AJ Ferguson	G	6-7	195	Sr.	Houston, TS /Southern Illinois
8	John McCrear	F	6-9	190	R-Fr.	Detroit, MI / Woodford County
9	Terence Harcum	G	6-3	205	Sr.	Butner, NC / Appalachian State
11	Justin Morgan	G	6-6	210	Jr.	Memphis, TN / Memphis Home School Association
13	Alden Applewhite	F	6-7	190	Jr.	Memphis, TN / Portland
14	Trey Boggess	G	6-4	190	Fr.	Murray, KY / Murray HS
17	Chiang Ring	F	6-8	215	Fr.	Minneapolis, MN / Park Center HS
23	Nick Ellington	F	6-7	215	Sr.	St. Louis, MO / Eastern Illinois
24	JaCobi Wood	G	6-2	190	Sr.	Cleveland, TN / Belmont
33	Mason Shubert	G	6-2	175	Fr.	Aviston, IL / Community Central HS
34	Tre Davis	G	6-0	180	Fr.	Memphis, TN / Houston HS
35	Jordan McCullum	F	6-8	180	Fr.	Harriman, TN / Harriman HS





Justin Bolis



Henry Burt



Berke Büyüktuncel



Connor Essegian



Braden Frager



Juwan Gary



Jeffrey Grace III



Gavin Griffiths



Sam Hoiberg



Cale Jacobsen



Nick Janowski



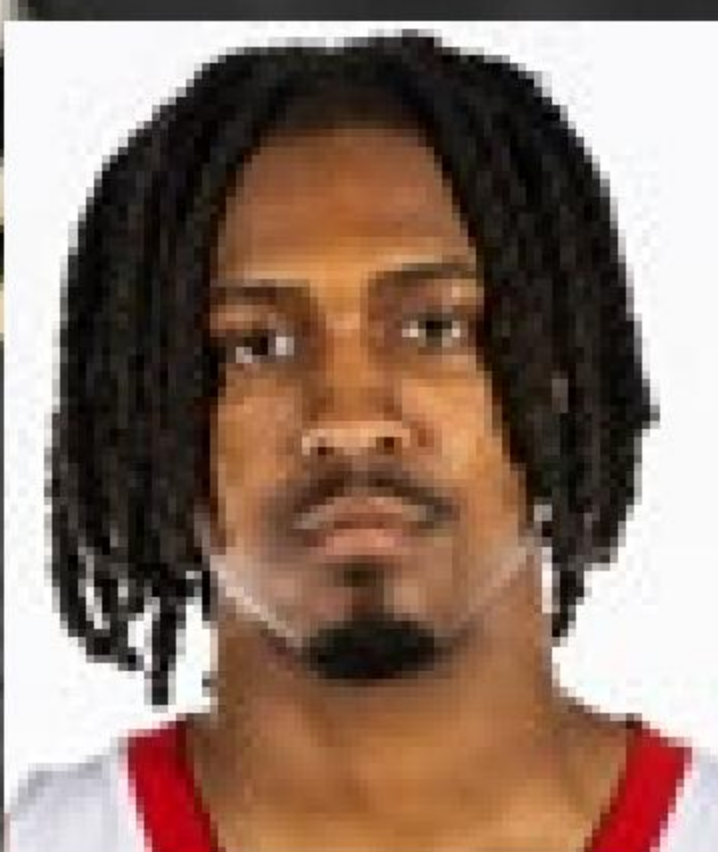
Rienk Mast



Braxton Meah



Andrew Morgan



Ahron Ulis



Brice Williams



Rollie Worster

NEBRASKA

Nickname: Cornhuskers

Colors: Scarlet and Cream

NCAA
Tournament
Appearances

8

NIT
Tournament
Appearances

19



2023-2024 Record

23-11



COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH
Fred Hoiberg

ASSISTANT COACH
Adam Howard

ASSISTANT COACH
Nate Loenser

ASSISTANT COACH
Ernie Zeigler

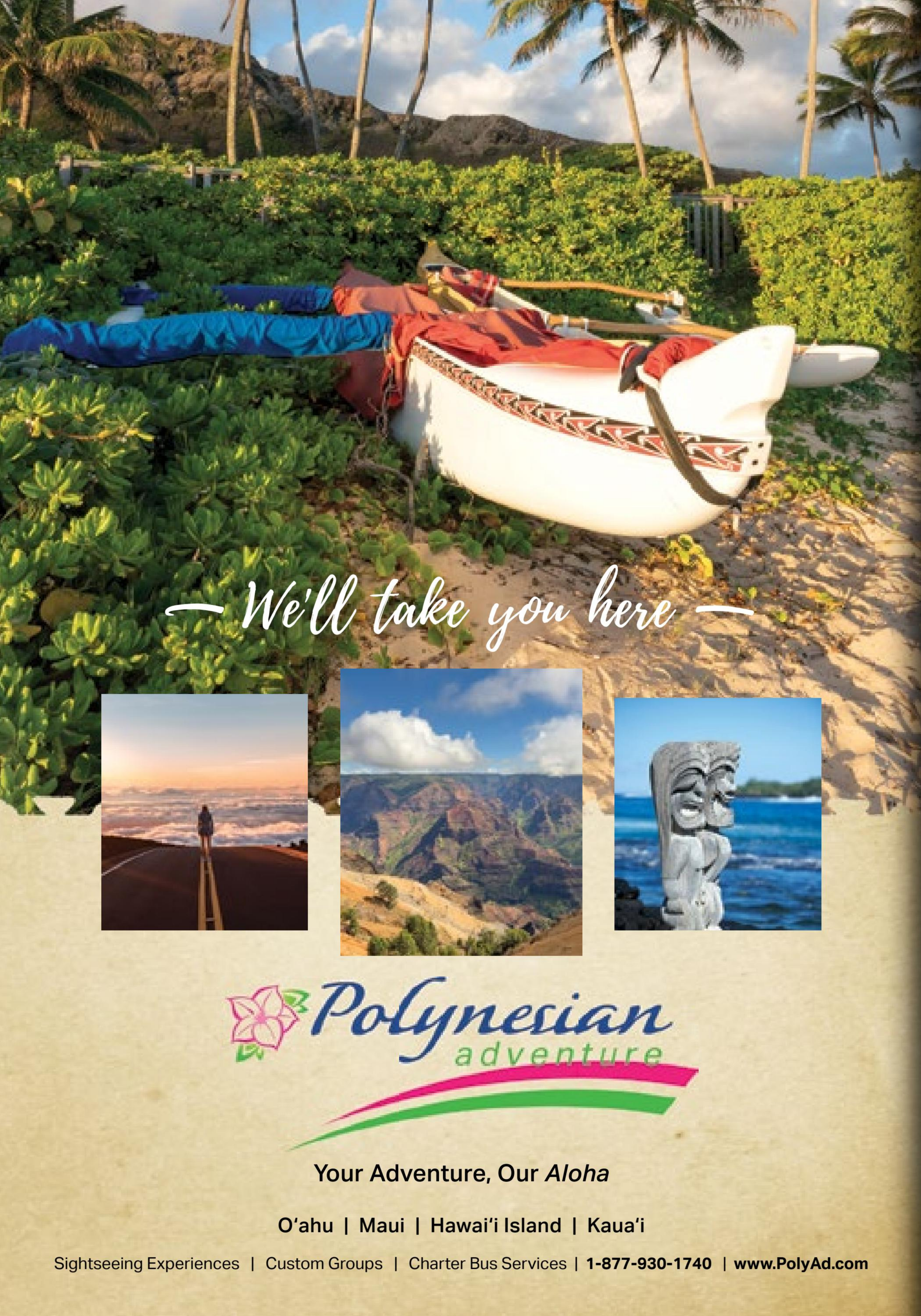
PLAYER TO WATCH: BRICE WILLIAMS

A three-level scorer and versatile defender, senior guard Brice Williams is among the Big Ten scoring leaders in 2024-25, averaging more than 17 points per game through Nebraska's first eight games. He started all 34 games in 2023-24, averaging 13.7 points, 5.5 rebounds, and 2.5 assists per game. He ended the season on fire, scoring 20+ points in three straight games, including 24 against Texas A&M in the NCAA Tournament. The MVP of the 2023 College Basketball Invitational, Williams brings leadership and skill to Nebraska after earning All-Conference USA honors at Charlotte, where he graduated with a degree in mass communications. Basketball runs in his blood—his father, Henry, is Charlotte's all-time leading scorer and a former NBA draft pick.

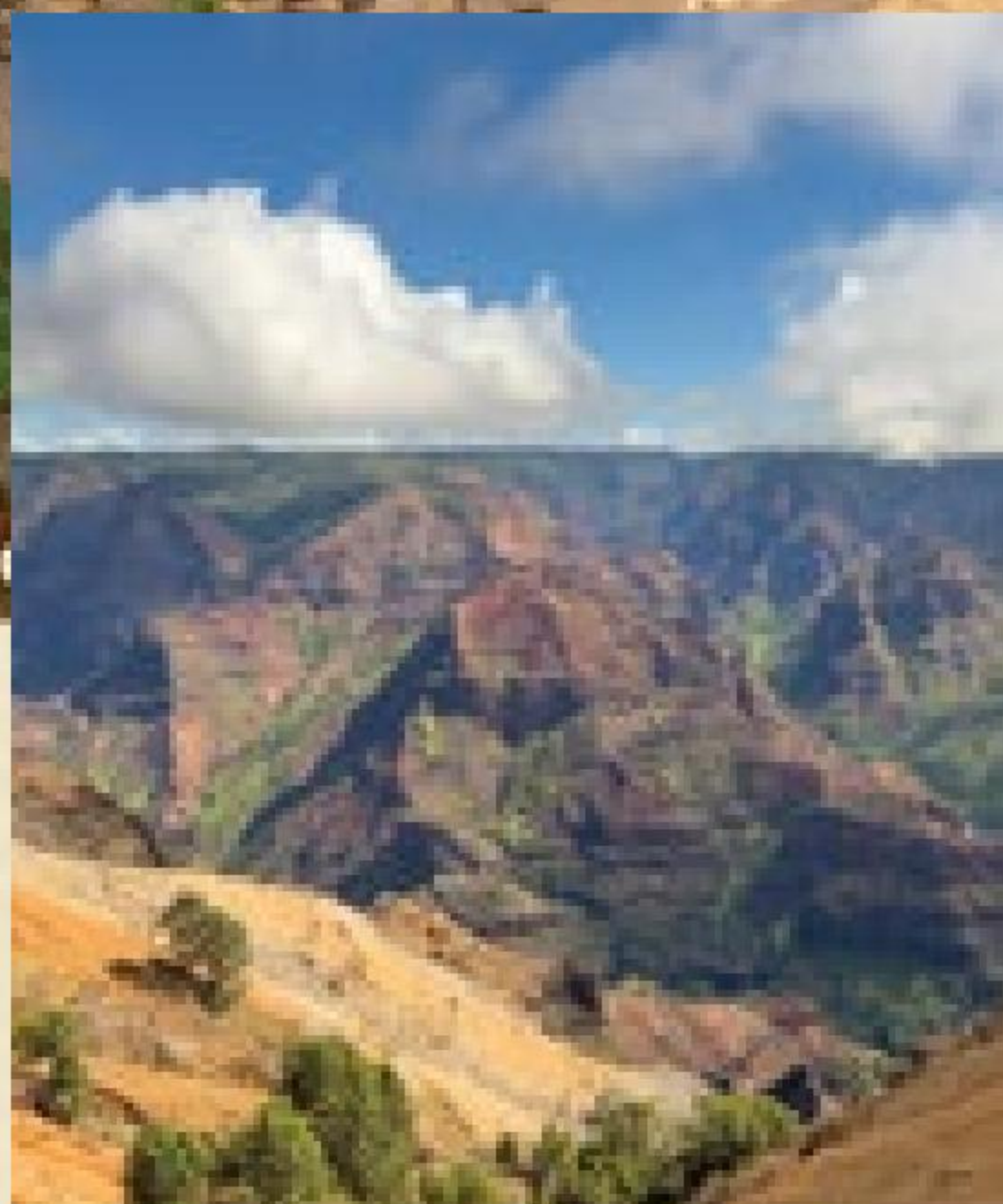
2024-2025 Roster

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	YR.	HOMETOWN / PREVIOUS SCHOOL
0	Connor Essegian	G	6-4	190	Jr.	Fort Wayne, IN / Wisconsin
1	Sam Hoiberg	G	6-0	185	Jr.	Lincoln, NE / Pius X HS
2	Ahron Ulis	G	6-3	190	Sr.	Chicago, IL / Iowa
3	Brice Williams	G	6-7	214	Sr.	Huntersville, NC / Charlotte
4	Juwan Gary	F	6-6	226	Sr.	Columbia, SC / UCLA
5	Braden Frager	F	6-7	220	Fr.	Lincoln, NE / Southwest HS
8	Jeffrey Grace III	G	6-3	200	Jr.	Elmhurst, IL / Arizona State
9	Berke Büyüktuncel	F	6-10	244	So.	Bursa, Türkiye / UCLA
12	Gavin Griffiths	G	6-7	193	So.	Simsbury, CT / Rutgers
20	Justin Bolis	F	6-8	225	So.	Lincoln, NE / Southeast CC
23	Andrew Morgan	F	6-10	242	Sr.	Waseca, MN / North Dakota State
24	Rollie Worster	G	6-5	210	Sr.	Missoula, MT / Utah
25	Nick Janowski	G	6-4	208	Fr.	Pewaukee, WI / Pewaukee HS
31	Cale Jacobsen	G	6-4	195	So.	Ashland, NE / Ashland-Greenwood HS
34	Braxton Meah	C	7-1	265	Sr.	Layton, UT / Washington
35	Henry Burt	F	6-7	222	So.	Omaha, NE / Elkhorn South HS
51	Rienk Mast	F	6-10	260	Sr.	Groningen, Netherlands / Bradley





— We'll take you here —

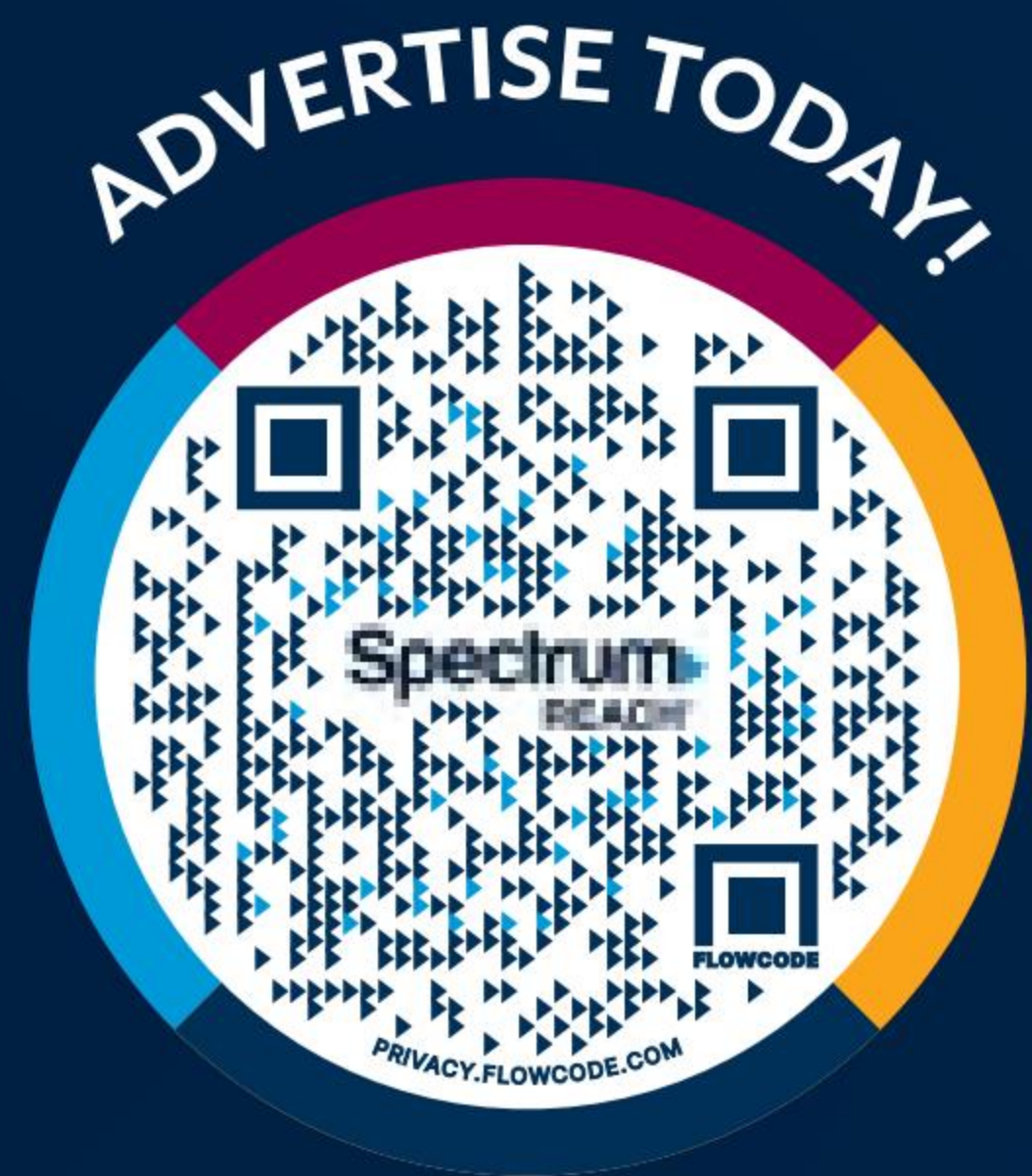


Your Adventure, Our Aloha

O'ahu | Maui | Hawai'i Island | Kaua'i

Sightseeing Experiences | Custom Groups | Charter Bus Services | 1-877-930-1740 | www.PolyAd.com

Amazon Ads is now a part of the Total Universe delivered by Spectrum Reach



Spectrum
REACH®

amazon ads

www.SpectrumReach.com





Xavier Banks



Jeremiah Bembry



Malcolm Christie



DQ Cole



Cooper Craggs



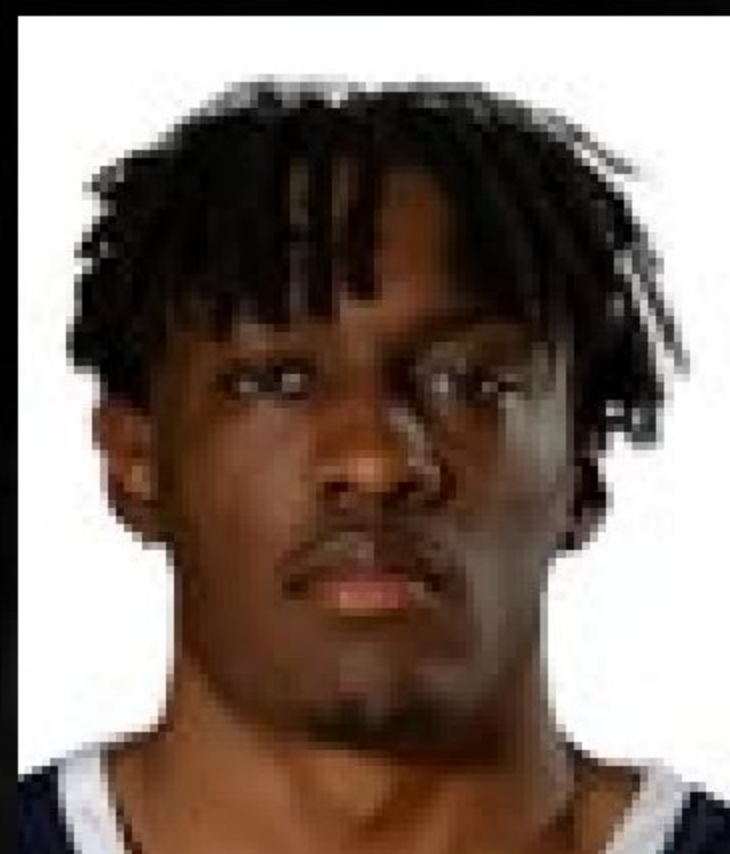
Luke Gelow



Chang Hoth



Jack Hoth



Justin James



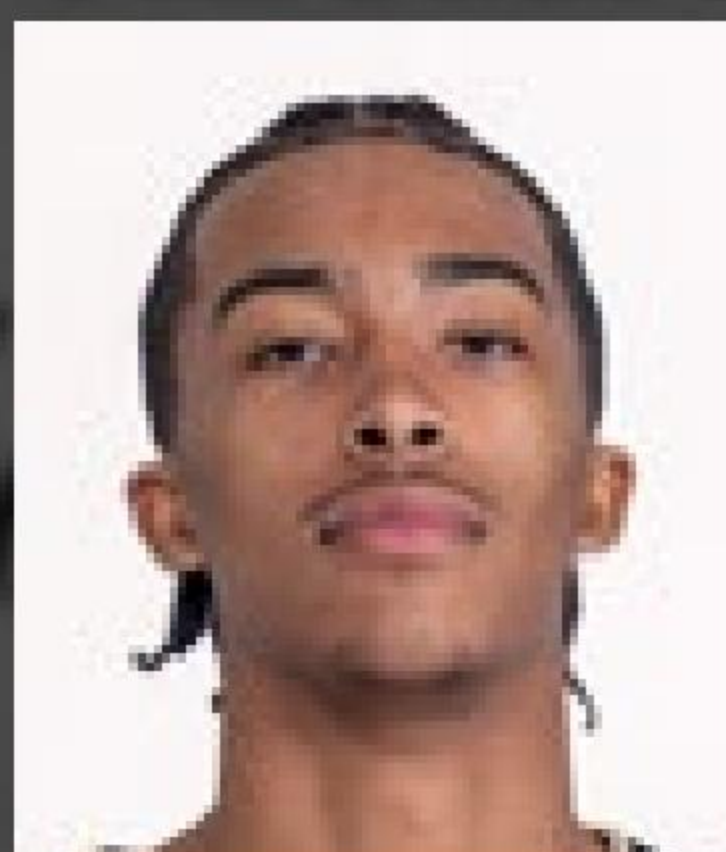
Jaylen Jones



Isaiah Jones



Deng Majak



Warren Marshall IV



Nassim Mashhour



Allen Mukeba



Buru Naivalurua



Jayson Woodrich



OAKLAND

Nickname: Golden Grizzlies
Colors: Black and Gold



COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH
Greg Kampe

ASSOCIATE HEAD COACH
Jeff Smith

ASSISTANT COACH
Trey McDonald

ASSISTANT COACH
Bobby Naubert

NCAA
Tournament
Appearances

4

NIT
Tournament
Appearances

1



2023-2024 Record

24-12

PLAYER TO WATCH: DQ COLE

DQ Cole is the Golden Grizzlies' top returning playmaker, poised for a standout season after earning a spot on the Horizon League's Preseason All-League Second Team. A clutch performer, Cole averaged 8.7 points and 4.2 rebounds across 36 games last season, with 21 starts. His defining moment came in the NCAA Tournament, where he delivered a flawless 3-for-3 performance from beyond the arc against Kentucky, including the game-winning three-pointer with just 28 seconds on the clock. Cole's ability to step up in high-pressure moments makes him a player to watch as he leads Oakland this season.

2024-2025 Roster

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	YR.	HOMETOWN / PREVIOUS SCHOOL
0	Nassim Mashhour	G	6-4	184	Fr.	Dearborn, MI / Dearborn High School
1	Jaylen Jones	G	6-0	156	So.	Nashville, TN / Tennessee St.
2	Jeremiah Bembry	G	6-5	185	r-So.	Brooklyn, NY / West Virginia
3	Luke Gelow	G	6-3	185	Fr.	Gaylord, MI / Gaylord HS
4	Chang Hoth	G	6-2	153	Jr.	Saint Paul, MN / Western Oklahoma St.
5	Jack Hoth	G	6-2	158	Jr.	Saint Paul, MN / Western Oklahoma St.
6	Malcolm Christie	G	6-5	185	Sr.	Fredericton, New Brunswick / Dalhousie
7	Isaiah Jones	G/F	6-7	229	Jr.	Nashville, TN / Detroit Mercy
8	Justin James	G	6-0	165	Jr.	Sterling Heights, MI / Macomb CC
10	DQ Cole	G	6-3	222	Sr.	Pontiac, MI / Henry Ford CC
11	Jayson Woodrich	G/F	6-7	205	Gr.	Cleveland, OH / Cleveland State
12	Buru Naivalurua	F	6-6	239	Sr.	Sydney, Australia / Garden City CC
13	Warren Marshall IV	G	6-5	165	Fr.	Auburn Hills, MI / Brother Rice HS
22	Deng Majak	F	6-9	192	Jr.	Turalei, South Sudan / Indian River St.
23	Allen Mukeba	F	6-6	247	Gr.	Charleroi, Belgium / UMKC
24	Zavier Banks	F	6-5	211	r-Fr.	Pleasant Ridge, MI / University of Detroit Jesuit HS
25	Cooper Craggs	F	6-5	224	r-So.	Northville, MI / Novi Catholic Central





DaJohn Craig



Parsa Fallah



Grey Garrison



Nate Kingz



Josiah Lake



Liutauras Lelevicius



Maxim Logue



Gavin Marrs



Matthew Marsh



Damarco Minor



Johan Munch



Thomas Ndong



Michael Rataj



Isaiah Sy



Ja'Quavis Williford



Kaan Yarkut



OREGON STATE

Nickname: Beavers
Colors: Orange and Black



NCAA
Tournament
Appearances

18

NIT
Tournament
Appearances

4



2023-2024 Record

13-19

PLAYER TO WATCH: MICHAEL RATAJ

Michael Rataj is a versatile sophomore poised to make a big impact after a strong 2023-24 season where he led his team with 5.8 rebounds per game and contributed 8.3 points, 47 assists, and 27 steals across 29 games. Overcoming a shin injury early last season, Rataj showcased his all-around game, building on a freshman campaign where he ranked among the Pac-12's top rookies in rebounds and points. A product of Germany's U15, U16, and U18 National Teams, he brings international experience and a polished skill set, making him a key player to watch this year

2024-2025 Roster

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	YR.	HOMETOWN / PREVIOUS SCHOOL
0	Damarco Minor	G	6'0"	190	Sr.	Chicago, IL / SIUE
1	Ja'Quavis Williford	G	6'7"	178	Fr.	Tampa Bay, FL / Red Rock Academy
2	Josiah Lake	G	6'2"	175	So.	Tualatin, OR / Tualatin HS
3	DaJohn Craig	G	6'1"	160	So.	Indianapolis, IN / Lawrence Central HS
6	Kaan Yarkut	G	6'6"	202	Fr.	Ankara, Turkey
7	Nate Kingz	G	6'5"	190	RJr.	Salem, OR / College of Southern Idaho
8	Gavin Marrs	F	6'11"	210	So.	Ellensburg, WA / Ellensburg HS
10	Grey Garrison	F	6'7"	200	RFr.	Bellingham, WA / Sehome HS
11	Parsa Fallah	F	6'9"	260	RJr.	Amon, Iran / Southern Utah
12	Michael Rataj	F	6'9"	205	Jr.	Augsburg, Germany / Ratiopharm Ulm
13	Isaiah Sy	F	6'7"	190	So.	Marseille, France / Cloud County CC
15	Matthew Marsh	C	7'1"	250	Sr.	Cornwall, England / Wake Forest
22	Thomas Ndong	F	6'10"	245	So.	Montreal, Quebec / NBA Academy Latin America
24	Johan Munch	F	6'11"	222	Fr.	Copenhagen, Denmark /Orangeville Prep
37	Liutauras Lelevicius	G	6'7"	208	RSo.	Kaunas, Lithuania
77	Maxim Logue	F	6'9"	215	Fr.	Lyon, France

COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH
Wayne Tinkle

ASSISTANT COACH
Marlon Stewart

ASSISTANT COACH
Stephen Thompson

ASSISTANT COACH
Chris Haslam

ASSISTANT COACH
Roberto Nelson



Home of the Original Chicken Sandwich®



Chick-fil-A® Ala Moana is proud
to support the Diamond Head Classic.



Chick-fil-A® and the Script Logo® are registered trademarks of CFA Properties, Inc.

© 2024 CFA Properties, Inc.

KANOA LEAHEY AND THE LEGACY OF HAWAI'I'S HOLIDAY HOOPS

By Reece Nagaoka

The number of non-conference college basketball tournaments continues to grow each season, but those played in Hawai'i remain distinctly unique. Tournaments like the Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic possess an aura that sets them apart from the rest of the field.

"What makes Hawai'i so special is its location and its beauty, but also the fact that, for so many decades now, it's been synonymous with big-time college basketball at this time of year," said Hawai'i broadcaster Kanoa Leahey, who is part of ESPN's broadcast crew for the Diamond Head Classic.

"There's no rich basketball tradition unless the tournaments themselves are loaded with great teams and fantastic players over the years. What makes Hawai'i's tournaments so special is the backdrop of the islands, especially during the holiday season—a time when so many corners of the United States are awfully cold and winter-like."

Adding to its charm, the Diamond Head Classic is the only tournament of its kind to be played during the week of Christmas. Still, the tradition of college basketball in Hawai'i during the holidays is older than the Classic itself, thanks in part to the Rainbow Classic.

"The Rainbow Classic, for so many decades, was one of the premier events in early-season college basketball," Leahey said. "That has evolved over time, and since 2009, the Diamond Head Classic has been an established entity and institution unto itself."

A STORIED PAST

Leahey's grandfather, Chuck, who was the athletic director for the 14th Naval District, and former University of Hawai'i basketball coach Red Rocha are credited with creating the Rainbow Classic, which began in 1964.

"At the time, the University of Hawai'i was trying to build itself into a full-fledged program," Rocha told the Honolulu Star-Bulletin in 2001. "The easiest and quickest way was to build a holiday tournament."

The tournament benefitted from a new NCAA scheduling exemption that allowed teams to play extra games outside the continental United States without it counting toward the NCAA-imposed game limit. While the inaugural year faced turbulence—most notably when head official Jimmy Aiona punched Utah State coach LaDell Andersen after the very first game—the Rainbow Classic quickly rose to prominence.

Over the years, it became one of the elite college basketball tournaments, attracting players like Michael Jordan, Pete Maravich, Elvin Hayes, and Isiah Thomas. Hall of Fame coaches such as Dean Smith, Mike Krzyzewski, Roy Williams, and Bobby Knight also left their mark on the event.

Although the Rainbow Classic has since downsized to a four-team tournament held earlier in the season, the Diamond Head Classic continues the vision Chuck Leahey and Red Rocha had in 1964: to elevate the University of Hawai'i basketball program and showcase the islands as a premier destination for top-tier college basketball during the holidays.

"I'm glad that the Rainbow Classic—even if it's in a different form in this modern day—is still a recognizable entity," Leahey said. "The Diamond Head Classic has kind of adopted some of that profile, and I approach being involved with it with a strong personal investment because of the history tied to my grandfather."

REPRESENTING HAWAI'I ON A NATIONAL STAGE

For Leahey, the tournament is more than just a family legacy. As a Honolulu native and someone of Native Hawaiian descent, he takes great pride in representing his community on a national stage.

"I don't think there have been too many national broadcasters who can say they're Native Hawaiian," he said. "As much as I'm trying to enhance the representation of Hawai'i and the University of Hawai'i, I'm also proud to represent the people of Hawai'i, including Native Hawaiians."

Leahey has provided play-by-play for Diamond Head Classic games every year since the tournament's inception, starting with three games in 2009 at the suggestion of Chris McLachlin, the longtime television analyst for University of Hawai'i volleyball. Today, Leahey calls six games over the three-day tournament, working alongside seasoned analysts and fellow ESPN play-by-play broadcaster Roxy Bernstein.

"I feel really fortunate to be a part of the Diamond Head Classic and to have worked with phenomenal analysts over the years," Leahey said. "It's been one of the true highlights of my broadcasting career without a doubt."

A TRADITION THAT ENDURES

Through the Diamond Head Classic, Leahey continues to carry the torch lit by his grandfather and Red Rocha, ensuring that Hawai'i remains synonymous with college basketball during the holidays. As players, coaches, and fans converge on the islands each year, they not only witness incredible basketball but also become part of a tradition that celebrates Hawai'i's culture, history, and enduring love for the game.



Hawai'i flies with us



We offer more flights between the Islands, connecting fans throughout Hawai'i.
Find exceptional fares at **HawaiianAirlines.com**.

