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## **FINALISTS FOR 2024-25 LEFTY DRIESELL AWARD**

*The top defensive players in division I college basketball*

BOSTON, MA -- CollegeInsider.com has announced the finalists for the 2024-25 Lefty Driesell award. The award is presented annually to the top defensive player in division I college basketball.

The Lefty Driesell award is named in honor of the legendary coach who spent over four decades as a head coach.

Driesell won 786 games in 41 years at Davidson, Maryland, James Madison, and Georgia State. He ranks eighth on the NCAA career Division I coaches victories list and his teams at each stop were known for playing tenacious defense. From 1969-1986 at Maryland, his teams posted a 348-159 record, won two Atlantic Coast Conference regular season titles and one tournament title.

Driesell also led Davidson, Georgia State and James Madison to the NCAA tournament, making him one of three coaches to reach the NAAs with four different programs. His teams won a total of 16 regular season championships and six tournament championships.

Charles "Lefty" Driesell passed away on Feb. 17, 2024. He was 92.

The recipient of the annual award is determined by a 10-member voting committee, which consists of current and former head coaches, as well as two senior staff members of

collegeinsider.com.

The 2025 award will be announced in San Antonio, TX, site of the men's Division I Basketball Championship.

#### LEFTY DRIESELL AWARD FINALISTS

Jadin Akins	6-4	Sr.	Michigan State
Zack Austin	6-7	Sr.	Pittsburgh
Ace Baldwin Jr.	6-1	Sr.	Penn State
TJ Bamba	6-5	Sr.	Oregon
Luke Bamgboye	6-10	Fr.	VCU
Jared Billups	6-4	Sr.	George Mason
Johni Broome	6-10	Sr.	Auburn
Alex Condon	6-11	So.	Florida
LJ Cryer	6-1	Sr.	Houston
Cooper Flagg	6-9	Fr.	Duke
Hayden Gray	6-4	Sr.	UC San Diego
Magoon Gwath	7-0	Fr.	San Diego State
Chucky Hepburn	6-2	Sr.	Louisville
Sion James	6-6	Sr.	Duke
Kobe Johnson	6-6	Sr.	UCLA
Denver Jones	6-4	Sr.	Auburn
Ryan Kalkbrenner	7-1	Sr.	Creighton
Tamin Lipsey	6-1	Jr.	Iowa State
Jahmai Mashack	6-4	Sr.	Tennessee
Bez Mbeng	6-4	Sr.	Yale
Stevie Mitchell	6-3	Sr.	Marquette
Micah Peavy	6-8	Sr.	Georgetown
Kadary Richmond	6-6	Sr.	St. John's
J'Wan Roberts	6-8	Sr.	Houston
Mitchell Saxen	6-10	Sr.	Saint Mary's
Devion Smith	6-0	Sr.	St. John's
Joseph Tugler	6-8	So.	Houston
Amari Williams	7-0	Sr.	Kentucky
Malcolm Wilson	7-0	Sr.	Queens
Zakai Zeigler	5-9	Sr.	Tennessee

#### PREVIOUS AWARD WINNERS

Boo Buie, Northwestern (2024); Caleb McConnell, Rutgers (2023); KC Ndefo, Saint Peter's

(2022); Davion Mitchell: Baylor (2021); Juvaris Hayes, Merrimack (2020); Matisse Thybulle, Washington (2019); Jevon Carter, West Virginia (2018); Jevon Carter, West Virginia (2017); Vashil Fernandez, Valparaiso (2016); Darion Atkins, Virginia (2015); Elfrid Payton, UL-Lafayette (2014); Tommy Brenton, Stony Brook (2013); Anthony Davis, Kentucky (2012); Kent Bazemore, Old Dominion (2011); Jarvis Varnado, Mississippi State (2010).

### **ABOUT COLLEGEINSIDER.COM**

Established in 1996, CollegeInsider.com has been at the forefront of promoting college basketball online. In the July 27, 1998, issue of ESPN the Magazine, College Insider was ranked No. 24 on the magazine's list of *99 Things to do Before you Die*. College Insider created the Mid-Major Top 25<sup>®</sup>, the measuring stick for men's and women's programs outside of the proverbial power leagues, and has 18 national awards presented annually, including the Lute Olson Award, Lou Henson Award, and the John McLendon Award. The CollegeInsider.com All-Access series has been nominated for 5 Emmy Awards and won 2013 Emmy, for its' feature on New York City Basketball (Iona, LIU-Brooklyn and Manhattan). CI also created *This Game No Secret*, which debuted during the 2016 CIT and now has become an annual event, which has included programs like Duke, Houston, Miami, Ohio State, Ole Miss, Texas and Virginia.

