

Ohio Football Welcomes Five Student-Athletes to the 2023 Signing Class

ATHENS, Ohio—The Ohio football program added five student-athletes to its 2023 signing class today (Feb. 1), as announced by second-year head coach [Tim Albin](#).

Wide receiver Chase Hendricks (St. Louis, Mo.), defensive end Danny Novickas (Chicago, Ill.), linebacker Brady Sestili (Delaware, Ohio), kicker Gianni Spetic (Chardon, Ohio) and safety DJ Walker (Aliquippa, Pa.). 12 student-athletes signed their National Letters of Intent and two graduate transfers committed to join the Bobcats during the early signing period, putting the 2023 signing class at 19 student-athletes.

The team is also announcing five preferred walk-on prospects: wide receiver Jack Borer (Perrysburg, Ohio), linebacker Chase Hall (Kitts Hill, Ohio), defensive lineman Caden Lockwood (Dublin, Ohio), defensive lineman Austin Mitchell (Avon, Ohio) and wide receiver Matt Stuewe (Avon Lake, Ohio).

The 2023 signing class features:

- Four defensive backs
- Three defensive ends
- One defensive tackle
- Two linebackers
- Two wide receivers
- One running back
- Two offensive linemen
- One tight end
- One quarterback
- One kicker
- One safety
- Student-athletes from 11 different states
- Seven student-athletes from Ohio

CHASE HENDRICKS

WR | 5-11 | 185 | St. Louis, Mo. | St. Mary's

Prior to Ohio: Earned four varsity letters for football at St. Mary's High School... Was also a three-year varsity runner and played JV basketball for one year... Captained the football team his senior year, finishing the season with 936 yards, 39 catches, 22 touchdowns and 1,300 all-purpose yards... Helped lead the 2021 and 2022 teams to state titles... Named First Team All-State, All-District, All Conference and Second Team All-Metro.

Personal: Born Jan. 26, 2005... Son of Rhelda and Charles... Has six brothers, Charles, Chaz, Charrezz, Costa-Rico, Choyce and Jaxson... Draws and plays video games in his spare time... Enjoys dressing up and loves shoes... Favorite athlete is Jamar Brooks... Roots for the Seattle Seahawks... Intends to major in sports management and hopes to play in the NFL.

DANNY NOVICKAS

DE | 6-3 | 225 | Chicago, Ill. | Mt. Carmel

Prior to Ohio: Born Feb. 10, 2005... Played at Mt. Carmel High School for four years, earning two varsity letters... Also played basketball... In 25 games played, he registered 166 total tackles with 15 total sacks, one blocked punt, one interception for touchdown, two forced fumbles, one fumble recovery and six pass breakups... Recorded 10 tackles and four sacks against Phillips High School (Sept. 3, 2021)... Helped his team become the 2022 7A State Champion with a 14-0 season, earning Mt. Carmel a No. 1 ranking in Illinois... The 2019 Mt. Carmel team went 9-0 to become CCL/ESCC Blue Conference Champions... Named 2021 and 2022 Outstanding Inside Linebacker of the Year... 2021 and 2022 First-Team CCL/ESCC All-Conference... Ranked a 3-Star Athlete at ON3Sports and 247Sports... Under Armour Next Ray Lewis Camp Invitee...

Personal: Son of Ray and Delilah... His dad was a defensive end at College of DuPage (1990) and Palos Force Semi-Pro (1991-95)... Has one younger sister, Gabriella... Enjoys lifting, golfing, listening to music and watching movies in his spare time... Favorite athlete is Micah Parsons and his favorite team is the Dallas Cowboys... Intends to major in business with the hopes of becoming a real estate agent and coaching after playing in the NFL.

BRADY SESTILI

LB | 6-3 | 195 | Delaware, Ohio | Dublin Jerome

Prior to Ohio: Was a four-year letterman for football and lacrosse at Dublin Jerome High School... Captained the 2022 football team, finishing his senior season with 152 tackles, 13 TFL, four sacks, one pass defended, two interception and one forced fumble in 12 games... Named First Team D1 All State, First Team All Metro, First Team D1 All District, First Team All OCC and Super 24 Football honoree for Central Ohio... Helped the Dublin Jerome lacross team become 2021 D1 OHSAA State Champions and 2022 D1 OHSAA State Runners-Up.

Personal: Born June 10, 2004... Son of Greg and Molly... Has one older sister, Kendall... His mother ran under Moe Banton at Ohio from 1987-91, competing on the four-time MAC Champion cross country team as well as the track team... Has two uncles and one cousin who participated in collegiate sports... Likes hanging out with friends, lifting and working out in his free time... Favorite athlete is Troy Polomalu and he his a Pittsburgh Steelers fan... Plans to major in business and marketing as well as minor in communications.

GIANNI SPETIC

K | 6-2 | 200 | Chardon, Ohio | Notre Dame Cathedral Latin

Prior to Ohio: Was a four-year varsity letterwinner for Notre Dame Cathedral Latin football team... Also earned two varsity soccer letters, four varsity baseball letters and played basketball for one year... Named 2022 First Team Crown Conference... Earned Second Team All-Ohio honors in 2021 and 2022... Kicked the longest field goal at Louisville High School (49 yards)... Also a 2022 Golden Glove recipient in baseball.

Personal: Born Jan. 22, 2005... Son of John and Lucy... Has one brother, Emilio... Multiple uncles and his brother played soccer on the collegiate level... Likes hunting and fishing in his spare time... Favorite athlete is Mike Trout... Roots for the Cleveland Browns, Cavaliers and Guardians... Is 100% Croatian... Intends to major in management with the hope of working in sports after playing for the NFL.

DJ WALKER

S | 6-1 | 170 | Aliquippa, Pa. | Aliquippa

Prior to Ohio: Born Aug. 26, 2005... Has two brothers, Larry and Zion, and one sister, La'Rice... Favorite athlete is LeBron James... Roots for the Baltimore Ravens and the Los Angeles Lakers.

Personal: Played football basketball and ran track at Aliquippa High School, earning letters in all three sports... Named All-State Saftey in 2021 and 2022... 2021 Beaver County Times Athlete of the Year... Earned Fabulous 22 Pittsburgh Post Gazette recognition.

Preferred Walk-On Prospects:

JACK BORER

WR | 6-3 | 190 | Perrysburg, Ohio | Perrysburg

Prior to Ohio: Earned three varsity letters at Perrysburg High School... Recorded 118 receptions and 17 touchdowns on 1,657 yards... Named 2022 First Team Northern Lakes League and All-District... Earned Second Team All-State Ohio Division I honors... Holds Perrysburg High School's records for career receptions and receiving yards as well as season receptions (66)... Helped lead the 2022 team to an 11-2 record that was highlighted by 11 consecutive wins, a Northern Lakes League championship and a regional semifinal game in the OHSAA Division I State Football Championships.

Personal: Born June 13, 2004... Son of Dan and Sherri... His older brother, Luke, is on the Ohio baseball team... Likes golfing, fishing, weight lifting and playing basketball in his spare time... Favorite athletes are Davante Adams and CeDee Lamb... Fan of the Detroit Lions and Tigers... Plans to major in business with the hopes of becoming an entrepreneur...

CHASE HALL

LB | 6-2 | 213 | Kitts Hill, Ohio | Dawson-Bryant

Prior to Ohio: Played varsity football for four years at Dawson-Bryant High School... Also ran track for three years and played basketball for one year... Finished his senior year with 333 carries on 2,976 yards, a 8.97 YPC, 46 Rushing touchdowns, 22- two point conversions... Recorded 11 receptions on 196 yds, scoring two receiving touchdowns... Completed an 87 yard kickoff return for a touchdown... Defensively, he recorded 93 solo tackles, 58 assists, nine tackles for loss, four sacks= 164, one interception, three fumble recoveries and one forced fumble... Named 2022 Gridiron Glory Player of the Year, Division VI Offensive Player of the Year, Second Team MaxPrep's Small Town All-American Team... In track, finished third at 2022 Division III states in 110 high hurdles... Holds the school record for rushing yards in a season (2,976).

Personal: Born July 2, 2004... Son of Bob and Teresa... Has one younger sister, Kaitlin... Has one older sister, Alexis, who played basketball at West Virginia State and North Greenville... His cousin, Ted Stute, played football at Ohio from 1957-60... Enjoys fishing and hunting in his spare time... Plans to major in Sociology-Criminology with the hope to start a career in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources...

CADEN LOCKWOOD

DL | 6-2 | 240 | Dublin, Ohio | Dublin Jerome

Prior to Ohio: Earned three varsity letters for baseball and football at Dublin Jerome High School... Also played basketball for one year... Finished his senior football season with 93 tackles, 12 sacks, 22 tackles for loss, three pass deflections, one forced fumble and one fumble recovery in 12 games... Named 2021 Honorable Mention All-OCC... Named 2022 Honorable Mention All-State, Second Team All-District, and First Team All-OCC and Defensive Front Player of the Year...

Personal: Born Feb. 7, 2005... Son of Michael and Mica... His father played baseball for three years at Ohio State before spending nine years on the Oakland Athletics and Boston Red Sox minor league teams... His uncle also played collegiate baseball while his grandpa played collegiate basketball... Has two brothers, Elias and Flynn... Likes fishing, hunting, scuba diving, skiing, hiking, camping and paintball... Favorite athlete is Aaron Judge... Fan of Cincinnati Reds and Bengals... Plans to major in criminal justice with the hope to have a career in the military of FBI.

AUSTIN MITCHELL

DL | 6-2 | 255 | Avon, Ohio | Avon

Prior to Ohio: Earned four varsity letters for the Avon High School football team... Also ran track, earning three varsity letters... Two-time SWC Lineman of the Year... Three-time First Team All-County and All-Conference... Two-time All-District and All-State... Named team MVP his senior year... Captained the football and track teams.

Personal: Born Oct. 25, 2004... Son of Zack and Laura... Has one brother, Ryder, and one sister, Ava... Enjoys fishing, hunting weight lifting, boating and hanging out with friends in his spare time... Favorite athlete is Nick Bosa... Roots for the Cleveland Browns... Plans to major in business and hopes to follow in his dad's footsteps and take over the family business.

MATT STUEWE

WR | 6-3 | 190 | Avon Lake, Ohio | Avon Lake

Prior to Ohio: Earned three varsity letters at Avon Lake High School for both football and basketball... Recorded three touchdowns on 42 receptions and 619 yards... Named All-County, All-District, All-Conference and All-Ohio... Helped lead the team to state playoffs his sophomore, junior and senior years...

Personal: Born June 25, 2004... Son of Michael and Suzanne... Has three brothers: Michael, Luke and Gabe... His dad played football at Virginia Tech before playing for the Detroit Lions... His brother, Michael, currently plays football at Case Western Reserve... His grandfather, Dennis Stuewe, played football at Nebraska alongside Frank Solich before playing for the New York Jets... Favorite athlete is Davante Adams... Roots for the Pittsburgh Steelers... Intends to major in business.

Ohio Football Welcomes 14 Student-Athletes to 2023 Signing Class

Athens, Ohio—The Ohio football program added 14 student-athletes to its 2023 signing class during the early signing period, as announced by second-year head coach [Tim Albin](#).

Defensive back Kendall Bannister (Woodbridge, Va.), defensive end Jay Crable (Massillon, Ohio), defensive end Owen DiFranco (Glenbard South, Ill.), wide receiver Desmond Duffy (Carmel, Ind.), defensive tackle Kobi Gorman (Pickerington, Ohio), running back Rickey Hunt Jr. (Oklahoma City, Okla.), offensive lineman Aidan Johnson (Elkridge, Md.), linebacker Andrew Marshall (Lancaster, Ohio), defensive back Byron Pearson Jr. (Oxford, Miss.), defensive back Jalen Thomeson (McCordsville, Ind.), tight end Mason Williams (Mogadore, Ohio) and quarterback Jacob Winters (Jackson, Ohio) all signed and submitted their National Letters of Intent.

Offensive lineman Ches Jackson (Tifton, Ga.) and defensive back Walter Reynolds (Grosse Point Park, Mich.) are both graduate transfers who have committed to join the Bobcats for the 2023 season.

The 2023 signing class features:

- Four defensive backs
- Two defensive ends
- One defensive tackle
- One linebacker
- One wide receiver
- One running back
- Two offensive linemen
- One tight end
- One quarterback
- Student-athletes from nine different states
- Five student-athletes from Ohio

KENDALL BANNISTER

DB | 5-11 | 170 | Woodbridge, Va. | Freedom

Prior to Ohio: Played football for four years at Freedom High School... Captained the 2022 team... Named All-District, All-Region and All-State... Led the team to a state championship.

Personal: Born March 30, 2005... Has three brothers, Kameron, Corey and Kippy, and one sister, Makayla... Deion Sanders is his favorite athlete... Is a fan of the Baltimore Ravens... Enjoys reading in his spare time... Is pursuing a degree in sports medicine... Hopes to play in the NFL.

JAY CRABLE

DE | 6-3 | 205 | Massillon, Ohio | Archbishop Hoban

Prior to Ohio: Played for Massillon Washington high school as a freshman and sophomore before transferring to Archbishop Hoban for his junior and senior years... Finished his senior season with 44 catches, three forced fumbles, five tackles for loss and one interception in 710 yards...

Personal: Born Oct. 13 2004... Son of Shawn and Julianne... His dad captained the Michigan football team before

playing for the New England Patriots and New York Jets... Has three brothers, Tayten, Kysen and Ryu, and three sisters, Calita, Zynova and Nyla... Favorite athlete is Avon Miller... Hopes to become a physicians assistant.

OWEN DIFRANCO

DE | 6-4 | 220 | Glen Ellyn, Ill. | Glenbard South

DESMOND DUFFY

WR | 5-9 | 190 | Carmel, Ind. | Carmel

Prior to Ohio: Ran track in addition to playing football for four years at Carmel High School... Captained the 2022 football team... Finished his junior year with 46 receptions and 12 touchdowns on 731 yards... Named 2021 ALL-MIC and 2021 Junior All-State.

Personal: Born Aug. 11, 2004... Son of Darrin and Donna... Has one brother, Donovan... Likes golfing, fishing and playing video games in his spare time... Favorite athlete is Steve Smith... Roots for the Cleveland Browns... Hopes to play in the NFL.

KOBI GORMAN

DT | 6-2 | 273 | Pickerington, Ohio | Pickerington High School Central

Prior to Ohio: Played football for four years at Pickerington High School Central... His senior year, he registered 84 tackles, 24 tackles for loss and seven sacks... Captained the team both his junior and senior years, becoming the second student-athlete to be named captain twice... Named First Team All-State, First Team All-District, First-Team All-OCC and OCC Player of the Year... While he was on the team, the Pickerington High School Central football team won one state championship, two regional championships and four OCC championships.

Personal: Born Nov. 15, 2004... Son of Cara and Aaron... Has one brother, Zach, and two sisters, Lindsy and Tawny... Favorite athlete is Aaron Donald... Is a fan of the Cincinnati Bengals... Enjoys being outside, working out, eating, fishing and watching sports and movies in his spare time... Intends to major in physical activity and sport coaching with the hope of pursuing a career as a physical therapist or a strength coach.

RICKEY HUNT JR.

RB | 5-11 | 190 | Oklahoma City, Okla. | Millwood

Prior to Ohio: Earned four varsity letters for both football and basketball at Millwood High School... Captained both teams as well... Led both teams to their respective championships in 2022, with basketball winning and football becoming the runner-up.

Personal: Born Dec. 28, 2004... Son of Rickey Sr. and Darise... Has one brother, Darius, and one sister, Rickell... Favorite athlete is Justin Fields... Is a fan of the Dallas Cowboys... Enjoys going to church, playing the drums and riding horses... Plans to major in sports administration and hopes to pursue a career in music.

CHES JACKSON

OL | 6-5 | 290 | Tifton, Ga. | Colorado State

Prior to Ohio: Transferred from Colorado State, where he graduated with a degree in communication studies and a business administration minor... Played in 25+ games and became a starter in 2021... Has seen action at all O-Line positions except center... Attended Tift County High School from 2014-18, where he played both football and basketball... Named First Team All-Region 1-7A junior and senior year... Team USA member U-18 (Junior Year) and U-19 (Senior Year).

Personal: Born July 18, 2000... Son of Mireya and Robert... Has two brothers, Brad and Charlie, and two sisters, Tricia and Jennifer... Favorite athlete is LeBron James... Roots for the Dallas Cowboys... Enjoys spending time with

family and friends in his spare time... Born in Harlingen, Texas, but grew up in Tifton, Ga.

AIDAN JOHNSON

OL | 6-3 | 300 | Elkridge, Md. | Our Lady of Good Counsel

Prior to Ohio: Played football for four years at Our Lady of Good Counsel, earning one varsity letter... Also played basketball for one year and rugby for two years... Started in every game in the 2022 season... Two-time Second Team All-Conference honoree.

Personal: Born Dec. 1, 2004... Son of Matthew and Jessica... Favorite athlete is Trent Williams... Favorite team is the Baltimore Ravens... Enjoys hiking and reading in his spare time... Finds statistics and history interesting... Intends to major in sports management with the hopes of working at a sports agency.

ANDREW MARSHALL

LB | 6-2 | 220 | Lancaster, Ohio | Bloom-Carroll

Prior to Ohio: Played for the Bloom-Carroll football team for four years, earning three varsity letters... Also earned one letter for both wrestling and track and field... Registered 383 total tackles, 222 of which were solo, from 2020-22... Also had 57 tackles for loss, eight sacks, four forced fumbles, two fumble recoveries, 15 pass breakups, four interceptions and one touchdown... In 2022, he scored 14 touchdowns on 164 carries in 1,099 yards... Was named Ohio DIII Defensive Player of the Year, DIII First Team All-Ohio, Central District Defensive Player of the Year, First Team All-Central District, First Team All-MSL, MSL Back of the Year, Lancaster Eagle-Gazette All-Area Defensive Player of the Year, First Team All-Area Lancaster Eagle-Gazette, Columbus Dispatch All-Metro Defensive Player of the Year and First Team Columbus Dispatch All-Metro Team in 2022... Earned First Team All-Area Lancaster Eagle-Gazette, Honorable Mention All-MSL and Honorable Mention All-Central District in 2021... Bloom-Carroll became Mid-State League Champions four times, Region 15 Champions twice, Region 11 Champions once, made the DIV State Final Four twice and were the DIII State Runner-Up once.

Personal: Born April 9, 2005... Son of Robert and Shellye... His mother played volleyball at Ohio State from 1997-99... Has two brothers, Nick and Robbie, and two sisters, Katie and Emily... His favorite athlete is Ray Lewis and he's a Green Bay Packers fan... Enjoys exercising and listening to music... Hopes to go into coaching and teaching.

BYRON PEARSON JR.

DB | 5-9 | 168 | Oxford, Miss. | Northwest Mississippi Community College (Senatobia, Miss.)

Prior to Ohio: Played in all 18 games between the 2020 and 2021 seasons at Northwest Mississippi Community College... In 2022, he helped Northwest to a 9-3 overall record, the MACCC Championship and an appearance in the inaugural NJCAA Division I Football Playoffs... Named 2022 JUCO All-American and was the 2022 NJCAA interception leader... Compiled 22 tackles, five 2.5 tackles-for-loss, a forced fumble and a 70-yard interception return for a touchdown in the Rangers' 2021 MACCC Championship victory, earning MACCC Defensive Player of the Week... Named 2021 First Team All-MACCC North Division... At Oxford High School, he holds program records for interceptions (15) and kick return yards (1,566)... His senior year, he helped the Chargers to a 14-1 record and the MHSAA Class 6A state championship... Earned first team honors from the Clarion-Ledger, Mississippi Association of Coaches, WCBI All-End Zone, Belk Ford All-Southern Elite Sports and the Oxford Eagle All-Area... Received first team All-Region 1-6A and Class 6A all-state honors as a kick return specialist during his junior season.

Personal: Born Dec. 13, 2000... Son of Angela and Byron... Favorite athlete is LeBron James... Likes to play basketball and relax in his spare time.

WALTER REYNOLDS

DB | 6-0 | 197 | Grosse Pointe Park, Mich. | College of the Holy Cross

Prior to Ohio: Transferred from the College of the Holy Cross... Captained the team and appeared in all 12 games

his senior year... Recorded a career-high 59 tackles on the season, including 41 solo tackles... Had eight pass breakups, three of which were against Bryant (Nov. 12)... Pulled in a career-high five interceptions for 87 yards, recording two in the FCS quarterfinals against New Hampshire (Dec. 3)... Won the team's "Hammer Award" as a junior and a freshman, which is presented to the player with the largest number of "big hits" on the season or the biggest hit overall... His junior year, he earned the team's Unsung Hero Award... Named to Phil Steele's All-Patriot League Second Team... Played football for four years and ran track at the University of Detroit Jesuit High School and Academy in Detroit, Mich....Captained the team his senior year... Selected First Team All-State by the Associated Press in 2017... Earned All-Catholic honors.

Personal: Born Nov. 30, 2000... Son of Walter and Veronica... Has two sisters, Whitney and Raven... Roots for the Tennessee Titans... Is an avid photographer... Pursing a sports management degree.

JALEN THOMESON

DB | 5-11 | 180 | McCordsville, Ind. | Center Grove

Prior to Ohio: Was a varsity starter at Mt. Vernon High School and Center Grove High School, earning four letters... Won three consecutive state championships (2020-22).

Personal: Born Dec. 15, 2004... Son of James and Kesha... Has one sister, Kaelly... Likes fishing and listening to music in his spare time... Interested in history... Favorite athlete is Odell Beckham Jr... Is a fan of the Indianapolis Colts... Plans to major in sales

MASON WILLIAMS

TE | 6-4 | 245 | Mogadore, Ohio | Mogadore

Prior to Ohio: He was a three-sport athlete all four years at Mogadore High School, earning four varsity letters in football, basketball and baseball... In 48 games, he registered 50 receptions on 696 yards in the air and 246 carries on 1,985 yards on the ground... Named First Team All-State, First Team All-District and Conference Player of the Year... The Mogadore High School football won four consecutive league championships.

Personal: Born Jan. 14, 2005... Son of Chris and Theresa... His dad played football at Toledo from 1993-97... His mother played softball at Toledo from 1994-98...Has two brothers, Austin and Landen... His brother Austin played football at Ashland University from 2017-21... His favorite athlete is Rob Gronkowski... He is a Cleveland sports fan and roots for both the Browns and the Guardians... Enjoys kayaking, paintball as well as playing cards and video games in his free time... Plans to major in integrated science education with the hope of becoming a high school science teacher and coaching.

JACOB WINTERS

QB | 6-2 | 220 | Jackson, Ohio | Jackson

Prior to Ohio: Captained the 2022 Jackson High School football team, where he earned letters all four years he competed... Also earned two varsity letters for basketball...Finished 227-for-399 on 4,290 yards with 56 touchdowns... Recorded 255 rushes and 19 touchdowns on 1,741 yards... Had five receptions on 44 yards with one touchdown... Defensively, he recorded 196 tackles, five tackles for loss, two sacks, four fumble recoveries, 10 interceptions and four defensive touchdowns... On special teams, he recorded five punt returns with one touchdown on 100 yards... In 2022, he was named First Team All-Ohio, First Team All-District, District Offense Player of the Year, First Team All-Frontier Athletic Conference (FAC) and FAC Player of the Year... In 2021, he was named Second Team All-Ohio, First Team All-District and First Team All-FAC... Earned All-Academic FAC from 2019-2022... Is the Jackson High School All-Time Career Leading Passer in Yards, Attempts, Completions, and TDs... Single Season Leading Passer in Yards, Attempts, Completions after his performances in 2021 and 2022... Set the record for most TDs in one game (5) in 202... Recorded multiple 300-yard passing games in 2021 and 2022... In his four years, the team finished with a 36-8 Record, were FAC League Champions in 2019, 2021 and 2022, and made four State Playoff Appearances with a record of 5-4.

Personal: Born Sept. 11, 2004... Son of Chuck and Lynn Winters... Has one brother, Dustin, an older sister, Carlie, and a twin sister, Jade... His brother played football at VMI and Tiffin from 2006-10... Favorite athlete is Jim Brown... Is an avid Ohio sports fan, rooting for the Cleveland Browns, Cincinnati Reds and Columbus Blue Jackets... Likes golfing, hunting and fishing, playing video games and hanging out with friends in his spare time... Plans to major in sports management and aspires to play in the NFL, coach college football and further his sports management education in a master's program.