

Gallup High basketball player to play at Haskell Indian Nations University

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Sun Correspondent
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Gallup High's boys varsity basketball team finished this past season with a record of 16-12, and as the #10 seed in 4A at state. In fact, the team has been district champions for the past four years, and part of that is all due to Khohanon Atazhoon. And now he's going on to play basketball in college

Atazhoon signed a letter of intent to play basketball for Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kan. on Aug. 6. In an interview with the *Sun*, he explained why he chose that school.

"I chose it because they offered me everything; tuition is free and [I want to] just to be around a Native environment. It's a big opportunity for me too," Atazhoon explained.

Basketball is something that's in Atazhoon's blood. His dad Cliff Jones played for the University of Arizona from 1991 to 1993. His older brother Quinn played at Pima Community College for two years, and this year he's transferring to play for Yakima Valley College, in Yakima, Wash.

Atazhoon's coach Josh Dunlap said it's a mix of his natural ability and his work ethic that makes Atazhoon a good basketball player.

"There's not that many 6' 5" guards even in the whole state, much less our class, but I think his work ethic [sets him apart from the rest.],” Dunlap said. “We brought him up to the high school program as an eighth grader, and he's probably been the hardest worker since then; always in the gym first, always out of the gym last. Even during pandemic times, he found a court, found a weight room, and he always did what he could.”

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When asked what he's looking forward to most in his next chapter, Atazhoon said he's looking forward to getting the chance to continue to play the sport he loves.

"I'm looking forward to my education and just continuing to play the sport of basketball, just keep it going at the highest level possible. Hopefully [I'll] make it far from there," Atazhoon said.

Dunlap said his advice to Atazhoon was to make sure to "stay hungry."

"I think people get complacent thinking 'Okay, I got my scholarship, that was it.' But I think there's a whole other level he can achieve if he pushes himself," Dunlap said.

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