



## Cameron Brink of Stanford and Garrett Jensen of San Francisco State Named CalHOPE Courage Award Winners for September

**SACRAMENTO – SEPT. 12, 2022** — Two California college student-athletes – **Cameron Brink**, a junior forward for the Stanford University women’s basketball team, and **Garrett Jensen**, a redshirt sophomore pitcher for the San Francisco State University (SFSU) baseball team – have been selected as the September recipients of the **CalHOPE Courage Award**. They will receive their awards tonight, in an on-field ceremony at Oracle Park before the San Francisco Giants versus Atlanta Braves game, from Stephen Revetria, President of Giants Enterprises and a member on the Governor’s Council of Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being.

The monthly award honors student-athletes at California colleges and universities for overcoming the stress, anxiety, and mental trauma associated with personal hardships and adversity. It is presented by the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA), in association with The Associated Press, CalHOPE, a crisis counseling and support resource for communities impacted by public health emergencies, operated by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), and the Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being.

At the end of the year, two of the student-athletes recognized during the year will be selected as annual **CalHOPE Courage Award** winners, and a \$5,000 donation will be made in each of their names toward mental health services at their schools. Stories of all honorees are available at [CalHOPECourageAward.com](https://CalHOPECourageAward.com) and via social media on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/CalHOPE_Courage) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/CalHOPE_Courage) at [@CalHOPE\\_Courage](https://www.instagram.com/CalHOPE_Courage).

Here’s a look at September’s CalHOPE Courage Award honorees:

### Cameron Brink

While Cameron was helping lead Stanford to the 2020-21 NCAA championship, averaging 9.9 pts, 6.6 rebounds, and 2.75 blocks per game, it seemed like a dream come true for the 6-foot-4-inch freshman. However, following the run to the national title during a worldwide pandemic, she shared publicly the mental health challenges of isolation and stress she experienced from a season spent primarily on the road. The native of Beaverton, Oregon showed incredible courage, sharing how the pressure of the season weighed on her, as well as her decision to seek professional help for her mental well-being.

Cameron’s continued focus on her mental health helped her to improve last season, leading the Cardinal to another Pac-12 championship and a spot in the Final Four, averaging 13.5 points, 8.1 rebounds, and 2.6 blocks in 35 games, while earning All-America honors by the

Women's Basketball Coaches Association and being named the consensus Pac-12 Defensive Player of the Year.

“Being open about the importance of treating mental health, as well as the benefits of counseling, has made me want to be an example and a role model for other young people who may not understand that it’s okay not to be okay,” said Brink. “Hopefully my experience and openness about treating mental health will help others understand that seeking help is one of the most courageous things you can do.”

### **Garrett Jensen**

During Garrett Jensen’s sophomore year at Heritage High School in Brentwood, he suffered partial paralysis when a meningioma tumor the size of a lemon was discovered in his spinal cord. Due to the paralysis, he was forced to re-learn how to walk and perform other motor skills. Amazingly, he was able to return to baseball for his junior campaign. However, in the fall of his senior year, the day after receiving an offer to play at SFSU, he learned he would need spinal fusion surgery to fix a curvature in his spine, which was a result of the tumor. Once again, through hard work, a positive mindset, and his support system, he returned and pitched his senior season.

At SFSU, Jensen pitched just one-third of an inning for the Gators in his redshirt freshman season. The 2021 season was cancelled; then, last season, the 6-foot 4-inch 230-pound right-handed hurler made 10 appearances for the Gators. An English-creative writing major who hopes to one day work in the field of sports writing, was recognized in 2020, 2021, and 2022 with California Collegiate Athletic Association All-Academic Awards.

“Having to re-learn how to walk and just function normally again, undergoing monthly two-hour long MRIs, and overcoming the adversity of a life-altering injury, all while wondering if I would ever play baseball again, was more stressful than I could have ever imagined,” explained Jensen. “I had unbelievable emotional support from my family and friends, for which I am forever grateful, but at the end of the day, nobody could get through it for me. I couldn’t imagine a life without baseball, so every day I made it a point to get just a little bit better and to take one step closer to my goal.”

Said Dr. Jim Kooler, Behavioral Health Special Consultant for DHCS: “CalHOPE is honored to recognize student-athletes throughout the state who, despite setbacks, have overcome life’s challenges to continue to perform their best as both scholars and athletes. CalHOPE’s purpose is to build community resiliency and help people recover through free outreach, crisis counseling, and support services. We hope that by sharing these stories that student-athletes have experienced, we will all be inspired.”

Sports information directors at all colleges and universities in California are encouraged to nominate deserving intercollegiate student-athletes through April 2023 at [CalHOPECourageAward.com](https://CalHOPECourageAward.com). The honorees will be selected by a panel of writers, editors, and sports information directors from CoSIDA and AP. Fans can learn more and engage on social media on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/CalHOPE_Courage) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/CalHOPE_Courage) at @CalHOPE\_Courage.

### **ABOUT CalHOPE**

CalHOPE is a multi-level campaign to connect people with vital mental health and wellness resources and information to help them find their way during these difficult times. CalHOPE

offers critical behavioral health crisis counseling programs. CalHOPE uses a public health approach that is focused on strength-based strategies of building resiliency and connecting people to the supports they need. CalHOPE partners with the CA Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being to promote the CalHOPE Courage Award. CalHOPE resources may be accessed by calling the program's warm line at (833) 317-HOPE (4673) or by visiting [www.calhope.org](http://www.calhope.org).

**About CoSIDA (College Sports Information Directors of America):** CoSIDA was founded in 1957 and is a 3,000-plus member national organization comprised of the sports public relations, media relations, and communications/information professionals of all levels of collegiate athletics in the United States and Canada. The organization is the second oldest management association in intercollegiate athletics. For more than 60 years, CoSIDA has recognized student-athletes as part of its Academic All-America awards program. Approximately 5,000 student-athletes are recognized each year for their excellence in the classroom and in competition. To learn more, visit [cosida.com](http://cosida.com).

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