

SIUE Adds NJCAA National Player of the Year Courtney Carter to its Roster

by Joe Pott
April 15 2020 1:40 PM



EDWARDSVILLE – SIUE men's basketball Head Coach Brian Barone has added National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division II Player of the year Courtney Carter (Memphis, Tennessee) to his roster.

Carter earned Region IV Tournament MVP honors and also was selected as an NJCCA Division II First Team All-America choice. On April 9, Carter capped off his list of awards when he was named the nation's top player.

He comes to SIUE from South Suburban College and will have two years of eligibility remaining.

A 6-foot, 1-inch, 180-pound guard, Carter averaged 15.7 points and 7.9 rebounds per game as a sophomore at South Suburban College. He averaged an NJCAA-best 5.5 steals per game, and dished out 7.9 assists (fourth-best) per game. He led South Suburban to a 29-4 overall record and a Regional Championship, before COVID-19 forced the cancellation of the National Tournament.

"What I respect most about Courtney Carter is he has an extremely high level of toughness," Barone said. "He fills a stat sheet in several winning areas. He can shoot the ball, create for others and rebounds as good as any guard his size. He has the ability to score from behind the arc as well as off the bounce in traffic. He is a very willing passer as his nearly eight assists a game would indicate."

"From the beginning, Coach Barone made it feel like family," Carter said of his decision to come to SIUE. "He believed in me. I feel like I can come in and make a difference. I feel like I can do something."

"Being named the National Player of the Year says a lot about his ability, coachability, and willingness to give himself for the team," Barone continued. "I like the fact that he really wanted to be here, and that meant a lot to me, too. Courtney was coached by John Pigatti at South Suburban Community College who has over 400 wins in his career."

Pigatti said Cougar fans will enjoy seeing Carter play.

"They're going to see a player who plays with a ton of heart and emotion," Pigatti said. "His defense is relentless. On offense he can shoot and score the ball and he makes other players around him better."

Coach Barone and his staff did a great job recruiting him," Pigatti continued. "He is a special player and one who will make some noise in the Ohio Valley."

Carter joins Ray'Sean Taylor (Collinsville, Illinois) as part of Barone's incoming recruiting class. Taylor averaged 23.6 points, 6.1 rebounds and 5.0 assists per game as a senior and finished his career as Collinsville High School's all-time leading scorer. Taylor recently was named to the Illinois Class 4A All-State team.

"Over Courtney's career he has shown the 'Find A Way' mentality we live by at SIUE," Barone added. "He will be a great addition to our team."