

# NBA Draft

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Brooklyn, New York, USA

## Allen Graves

**Q. As a Canadian, welcome to Toronto. So as a guy from down south, what's excited you the most to play for a team that would have the entire country up north supporting you?**

ALLEN GRAVES: It's amazing. You know, I come from Ponchatoula, Louisiana, so kind of a big support system there. It's an everybody-knows-everybody town. Just having that same feeling coming up north is going to be amazing, the family culture of it. That's what I'm used to and that's what I grew up in. Knowing that that same thing is in Toronto waiting for me is just an amazing feeling.

And then, you know, excited for the big-city vibe, coming from a small town. Really excited to be in a big city. Really appreciative of the Toronto Raptors.

**Q. How high on the priority list is it to become boys with Drake, and is the goal to one day having him rock your jersey courtside?**

ALLEN GRAVES: Obviously that would be a big flex, having Drake rock my jersey courtside. I know he's a big part of the Toronto Raptors. So his support would be amazing. Just tell him reach out.

Having his support is amazing and just another asset to the team and another enticing factor of being drafted by the Toronto Raptors.

**Q. How much do you know about Darko's style? Have you talked to him before the draft, and how did that talk, if you did, what did he tell you? And when you worked out over there, can you describe that a little bit?**

ALLEN GRAVES: Yeah, for sure. Definitely got out there on a visit to Toronto and it was amazing. I just saw the culture there and how amazing it was. Got to see the head coach and just really his style of play. You know, the European, just bringing that to the NBA. They like bigger wings, so being able to showcase what I can do in front of him and in front of their whole office staff was an amazing feeling.

You can tell they are very invested into the team, and not



just basketball-wise but also who you are as a person, off the court, on the court. They build that relationship with you, and that's something that is invaluable to me because you want to build that relationship with your coach. That's something Santa Clara did with me and that's why I love my time there.

I can tell how invested he was in the players, even watching the workouts he was at. He was at every player's workout, individual workout in their offseason and just was there right behind them telling them, you know, hey, critiquing them, giving them advice. And really his dedication to wanting his players to succeed is what I noticed the most and stuck with me, even now.

**Q. Brandin Podziemski, Jalen Williams, Allen Graves. In three of the last five drafts, a Santa Clara player has been selected in the first round. How do you guys think you have put the program more on the map since the Steve Nash days and just in general?**

ALLEN GRAVES: Just the pedigree we're building. That's a testament to Coach Herb [Sendek] and the staff that he's put together. The culture change they have done at Santa Clara is amazing, and they have built that family culture. They have built a relationship with you off the court, on the court.

I redshirted my freshman year. Didn't have all the rankings and everything like that. But they believed in me and saw the talent from high school, which I called myself Chubby Allen. They believed in that kid, that Chubby Allen kid. They take the time to invest in you on the court, off the court, and that's something that you can't look past. They do a great job with the culture, the family culture. And then just Jalen having -- it obviously pays off with Jalen, Brandin and then now myself.

**Q. Do you have relationships with any of those guys or Steve Nash?**

ALLEN GRAVES: Jalen, Brandin -- Steve Nash came to a couple games and made a lot of videos for us when we made the tournament. Jalen and Brandin came to games also. Jalen texted me before the draft and telling me he was proud of me, and Brandin commented on a post when I declared for the draft. The alumni aspect of it, they are



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invested in Santa Clara, and that's where I plan to be. Those are my teammates, and continue to keep up with them and stay in touch with them.

**Q. How are those relationships going to help you to start your career?**

ALLEN GRAVES: I mean, it's going to be very beneficial. The more people I know in this league, the more I can learn and more I can be a student of the game on the court, off the court, just being able to adjust quicker. That's one thing that Santa Clara did a great job of is preparing us for the NBA and the NBA style of play. That's why feel like Jalen and Brandin were very good in their rookie years, because they were kind of already adjusted to the style of play of the NBA.

Just plan to do that myself.

**Q. So just on top of your head, who are some of the Raptors legends that inspire your style of play?**

ALLEN GRAVES: Inspire my -- well, I'll just talk about the team this year. Scottie Barnes, Collin Murray-Boyles, both of those guys, their impact on both ends of the floor. Being able to impact offensively as well as defensively, that's something I want to do at the next level, is be a two-way guy, being able to impact at both levels, both sides of the ball.

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