

## ALEX WILLIAMS



### **PROFILE**

Alex Williams, a star pitcher and shortstop at Redwood Christian High, actually got a start in baseball playing in both the Castro Valley Little League and CV Independent.

"I don't think I was supposed to do that," he now admits. "But I did."

Hey, it worked. Williams went on to be an All-State pitcher at Redwood Christian and All-American at Stanford before getting drafted by the Florida Marlins in the 2022.

Williams, 24, is appreciative of his Castro Valley roots.

"The people surrounding me really pushed me," the right-hander said. "My teammates encouraged me to love the game and work hard. When I'd come back from winter break at Stanford, I knew the guys I could contact to go get a workout. Everybody in the baseball community in Castro Valley has been truly supportive."

Having graduated from youth basketball, soccer and even karate to focus on baseball, Williams went on to do something few could have ever imagined: He successfully followed in the huge footsteps of a pitcher he labels as his idol – A.J. Vanegas, who paved the way from Redwood Christian to Stanford for a star who had many options.

"He was eight years older than me," Williams notes. "My older sister (Nia) would tell me about him because she knew I was really into baseball. So I started following him. He was THE baseball guy who went to my school. Everybody knew who he was."

Soon, the same was true for Williams, the National Christian Schools Athletic Association National Player of the Year in 2018 under coaches Jim Cleveland and Mark Saake at Redwood Christian and Pacific-12 Conference Pitcher of the Year in 2022 at Stanford, where he had a 23-8 record.



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Williams is now in his third season with the Marlins organization, hoping to make the jump from the High-A minor-league level to Double-A this year. A lot will depend upon how his right elbow holds up after becoming so painful last year, he opted for a PRP injection in the off-season.

Regardless of where he pitches this summer, he knows where he'll be next fall – at some local baseball field, instructing at a youth camp.

"I have always loved coaching kids," he assures. "I love giving back."

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