

**Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729- 3685)**

**NORTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® ARKANSAS BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 8, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Isaiah Joe of Northside High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Arkansas Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Joe is the first Gatorade Arkansas Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Northside High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Joe as Arkansas' best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, Joe joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Karl-Anthony Towns (2012-13 & 2013-14, St. Joseph HS, N.J.), Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.) and Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot-4, 170-pound senior guard had led the Grizzlies to a 21-9 record and a berth in the Class 7A state championship game at the time of his selection. Joe averaged 23.5 points, 5.8 rebounds and 5.5 assists through 30 games. An All-State honoree, he was also named to the Southwest Times Record All-Region team and was selected to the USA TODAY's ALL-USA Arkansas First Team.

A member of his school's Student Advisory Council, Joe has volunteered locally on behalf of youth basketball camps.

"Isaiah Joe is hands down the best player we've faced all year," said Todd Ezzi, head coach at Little Rock Catholic High. "He can create his own shot, he's an excellent passer and he's become a guy who can take it to the hole and finish. He can do it all."

Joe has maintained a 3.76 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Arkansas this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Joe joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Boys Basketball Players of the Year Daniel Gafford (2016-17, El Dorado High School), Malik Monk (2015-16, Bentonville High School), Kevaughn Allen (2014-15 & 2013-14, North Little Rock High School), Bobby Portis (2012-13, Hall High School), Archie Goodwin (2011-12 & 2010-11, Sylvan Hills High School), Preston Purifoy (2009-10, Conway), Fred Gulley (2008-09 & 2007-08, Fayetteville High School), and James Anderson (2006-07, Junction City High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Isaiah will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.