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**DIMOND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® ALASKA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 19, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Alissa Pili of Dimond High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Alaska Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Pili is the second Gatorade Alaska Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Dimond 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 Pili as Alaska's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Pili joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot junior forward had led the Lynx to a 27-0 record and a berth in the Class 4A state tournament at the time of her selection. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, Pili averaged 19.4 points, 10.1 rebounds and 1.9 steals through 27 games, converting 66.5 percent of her field goal attempts. MVP of the Dimond Lady Lynx Prep Shootout, she is a two-time First Team All-State honoree and the Cook Inlet Conference Player of the Year.

Pili has volunteered locally on behalf of the YMCA, the Special Olympics and youth basketball programs. "Alissa Pili is the best player we've faced," said Jeff Bowker, head coach at Colony High. "She's skilled, she plays hard and she's impossible to defend because of her size, strength and athleticism. A bad game for her is a double-double."

Pili has maintained a 3.03 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Two-time winner Pili joins Gatorade Alaska Girls Basketball Players of the Year Ruthy Hebard (2015-16, 2014-15 & 2013-14, West Valley High School), Alysha Devine (2012-13, Wasilla High School), Hannah Mattson (2011-12, West Valley High School), Keiahna Engel (2010-11 & 2009-10, Dimond High School), Jenna Johnson (2008-09, Wasilla High School), Sylvia Bullock (2007-08, South Anchorage High School), and Talisa Rhea (2006-07, Juneau-Douglas High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Alissa 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/>.

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