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**CENTRAL ARKANSAS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® ARKANSAS GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 19, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Christyn Williams of Central Arkansas Christian School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Arkansas Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Williams is the second Gatorade Arkansas Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Central Arkansas Christian 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 Williams as Arkansas' best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Williams 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 5-foot-11 senior guard led the Mustangs to a 36-1 record and the Class 4A state championship this past season. The state's two-time returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, Williams averaged 26.8 points, 10.4 rebounds, 2.9 assists and 1.8 steals per game. A member of the USA Basketball Women's U19 National Team, she is a four-time All-State honoree and is ranked as the nation's No. 1 recruit in the Class of 2018 by espnW. Also the Women's Basketball Coaches Association High School Player of the Year and the Naismith Trophy High School Player of the Year, she has been chosen to play in both the McDonald's All-American Game and the Jordan Brand Classic.

Williams has raised money to benefit the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure and has volunteered locally on behalf of the Arkansas Dream Center, Autism Awareness Camp and youth basketball programs. "Christyn Williams is by far the best player I have seen in my 30 years of coaching," said Sheila Burns, head coach at West Memphis High. "She is in a league of her own in Arkansas."

Williams has maintained a 3.48 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Connecticut beginning 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.

Three-time winner Williams joins Gatorade Arkansas Girls Basketball Players of the Year Jordan Danberry (2014-15 & 2013-14, Conway High School), Tyler Scaife (2012-13 & 2011-12, Hall High School), Calli Berna (2010-11, Fayetteville High School), Morgan Hook (2009-10 & 2008-09, Rogers High School), Shekinna Stricklen (2007-08, Morrilton High School), and Whitney Zachariason (2006-07, Central Arkansas Christian High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Christyn 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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