

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

**WORCESTER ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® MASSACHUSETTS 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 Aliyah Boston of Worcester Academy as its 2017-18 Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Boston became the first Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Worcester Academy when she won the award for her 2016-17 season.

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 Boston as Massachusetts' best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Boston 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 state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-4 junior post led the Hilltoppers to a 23-1 record and the New England Prep School Athletic Council Class AA tournament championship this past season. Boston averaged 21.2 points, 14.0 rebounds, 6.2 blocks, 2.5 assists and 2.2 steals per game and recorded four triple-doubles and 19 double-doubles in 24 games. A member of the USA Basketball Under-16 Women's National Team, Boston was the tournament MVP as the U.S. won a gold medal at the 2017 FIBA Americas U16 Championship in Argentina. She is rated as the nation's No. 2 recruit in the Class of 2019 by Blue Star Basketball.

A native of the Virgin Islands who lives with her aunt in Worcester, Boston has volunteered with hurricane relief efforts in her hometown of St. Thomas. She has donated her time locally as a student ambassador for her school and as a youth basketball coach. "Aliyah is the best player we faced all season," said Caroline Stedman, head coach of Deerfield Academy. "Her size makes her unstoppable in the paint, but she can also shoot and handle the ball fairly well. Good things happen every single time she touches the ball or is involved in the play."

Boston has maintained a B average 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 Boston joins Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Basketball Players of the Year Katie Benzan (2015-16, Noble & Greenough School), Ashley Russell (2014-15 & 2013-14, Braintree High School), Olivia Healy (2012-13, Reading Memorial High School), Nicole Boudreau (2011-12 & 2010-11, Andover High School), Lauren Battista (2009-10, Oliver Ames High School), Bilqis Abdul-Qaadir (2008-09, New Leadership Charter School), Felicia Barron (2007-08, Springfield Central High School), and Carolyn Swords (2006-07, Lincoln-Sudbury High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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

###