

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

**WESTMOORE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® OKLAHOMA 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 Jessi Murcer of Westmoore High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Murcer is the first Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Westmoore 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 Murcer as Oklahoma'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, Murcer 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-8 senior guard led the Jaguars to a 21-6 record and the Class 6A state final this past season. Murcer averaged 21.3 points, 3.4 rebounds, 2.0 assists and 2.0 steals per game while shooting 61.5 percent from inside the 3-point arc. A three-time Miss Basketball Oklahoma finalist and the school's career scoring leader with 2,065 points, Murcer is rated as the nation's No. 28 point guard in the Class of 2018 by espnW.

Murcer has volunteered locally at the Central Oklahoma Humane Society, the First National Food Bank and Rambling Oaks Assisted Living. She has also donated her time to working with young athletes at the YMCA and as a sports team leader for a camp at Westmoore Community Church. "Jessi's got the ability to create, she's tough to stop, she plays in the best league—absolutely, she's my choice for Gatorade Player of the Year," said Mike Neal, head coach at Norman High. "I can't really think of another girl up there with her. Out of all the girls we've seen in this state, all the chips would be on Jessi."

Murcer has maintained a weighted 4.43 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball at the University of Oklahoma 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.

Murcer joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Basketball Players of the Year Ana Llanusa (2016-17, Choctaw High School), Aaliyah Wilson (2015-16 & 2014-15, Muskogee High School), Chelsea Dungee (2013-14, Preston High School), Lakota Beatty (2012-13, Anadarko High School), Courtney Walker (2011-12, Edmond Santa Fe High School), Ashley Clark (2010-11, Midwest City High School), Richa Jackson (2009-10, Midwest City High School), Kevi Luper (2008-09, Adair High School), Alyssia Brewer (2007-08, Sapulpa High School), and Angel Goodrich (2006-07, Sequoyah High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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

###