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**Contact: Kisa Mugwanya (312-729- 3670)**  
**GatoradePOYQuestions@Fleishman.com**

## **NSU UNIVERSITY SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE® FLORIDA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (March 15, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Vernon Carey Jr. of NSU University School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Carey Jr. is the first Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from NSU University 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 Carey Jr. as Florida's 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, Carey Jr. joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Karl-Anthony Towns (2012-13 & 2013-14, St. Joseph High School, N.J.), Dwight Howard (2003-04, Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln High School, Texas), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood High School, Calif.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington High School, Colo.) and Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame High School, Calif.).

The 6-foot-10, 255-pound senior center led the Sharks to a 27-4 record and a second straight Class 5A state championship this past season. Carey averaged 21.1 points, 9.0 rebounds, 1.5 assists and 1.1 blocks per game. The Florida Dairy Farmers Mr. Basketball as a junior, Carey is a 2019 McDonald's All-American Game selection. He was the tournament MVP for Team USA at the 2017 FIBA Americas U16 Championship, and earned All-Tournament recognition at the 2018 FIBA U17 World Cup.

The son of former Miami Dolphins offensive lineman Vernon Carey, he has volunteered locally on behalf of his father's philanthropic foundation, which creates programs and provides support for South Florida youth. "Vernon Carey Jr. is a dominant player," said Andre Torres, head coach of Chaminade-Madonna High. "He is at the center of opposing coaches' scouting reports, and the key to his team's success. He impacts the game at both ends of the floor."

Carey has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at Duke University 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.

Carey Jr. joins Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Players of the Year R.J. Barrett (2017-18, Montverde Academy), Chaundee Brown (2016-17, The First Academy), Tony Bradley (2015-16, Bartow High School), and Ben Simmons (2014-15, Montverde Academy) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Carey Jr. also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [www.Gatorade.com/POY](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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