

MADISON CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE® KENTUCKY BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (March 15, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Isaiah Cozart of Madison Central High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Kentucky Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Cozart is the third Gatorade Kentucky Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Madison Central 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 Cozart as Kentucky'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, Cozart 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-8, 239-pound senior center averaged 20.0 points, 12.2 rebounds, 5.8 blocks and 1.0 assists per game this past season, leading the Indians (17-14) to the 11th Region Tournament quarterfinals. The 11th Region Player of the Year, Cozart is a two-time First Team All-State selection and was a finalist for the state's Mr. Basketball award. He concluded his prep basketball career with 1,575 points, 1,268 rebounds and a state-record 716 blocked shots.

The son of a pastor, Cozart has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach and he has donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church youth group. "Isaiah was a very intimidating player for opposing teams; he controlled the game at both ends of the floor," said Jeron Dunbar, head coach of Somerset High School. "We played them twice and could not get any shots inside the paint. If he didn't block them, he would alter the shots."

Cozart has maintained a weighted 3.23 GPA in the classroom and represents one of the state's top academic candidates in meeting the Gatorade award's broad criteria. He has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at Western Kentucky 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.

Cozart joins Gatorade Kentucky Boys Basketball Players of the Year CJ Fredrick (2017-18, Covington Catholic High School), Taveion Hollingsworth (2016-17, Paul Laurence Dunbar High School), Quentin Goodin (2015-16, Taylor County High School), and Camron Justice (2014-15, Knott County Central High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Cozart 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

###