

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Kisa Mugwanya (312-729- 3670)
GatoradePOYQuestions@Fleishman.com

LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE® MICHIGAN 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 **Emoni Bates of Lincoln High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Michigan Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Bates is the first Gatorade Michigan Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Lincoln 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 Bates as Michigan'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, Bates 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-9, 180-pound freshman forward had led the Railsplitters to a 21-4 record and a berth in the Division I state semifinals at the time of his selection. Bates averaged 28.7 points, 10.2 rebounds, 1.8 steals and 1.8 assists through 25 games. In the regional tournament semifinals, he hit a game-winning 3-pointer in the final seconds, and followed that with the game-winning tip-in at the buzzer in the regional championship game. He participated in a USA Basketball Junior National Team training camp in October.

Bates has volunteered locally as part of an elementary school literacy outreach initiative and as a youth basketball coach. He has also donated his time collecting clothes and shoes to gift to community churches and groups in need. "Emoni is a great shooter, scorer, ball-handler, rebounder and defender," said Lamonta Stone, head coach of River Rouge High. "Emoni is 6'8 and he handles and shoots the ball like he's 5'8. In today's NBA, he is a poster child for the new term being thrown around—the position-less player."

Bates has maintained a 3.10 GPA in the classroom and represents one of the state's top academic candidates in meeting the Gatorade award's broad criteria. He will begin his sophomore 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.

Bates joins Gatorade Michigan Boys Basketball Players of the Year Foster Loyer (2017-18, Clarkston High School), Isaiah Livers (2016-17, Kalamazoo Central High School), Cassius Winston (2015-16, University of Detroit Jesuit High School), and Deyonta Davis (2014-15, Muskegon High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Bates 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.

###