

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

HUNTINGTON-ST. JOSEPH PREP STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE® WEST VIRGINIA 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 **Jaemyn Brakefield of Huntington-St. Joseph Prep** as its **2018-19 Gatorade West Virginia Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Brakefield is the second Gatorade West Virginia Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Huntington-St. Joseph Prep.

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 Brakefield as West Virginia'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, Brakefield 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, 205-pound junior forward led the Irish to a 21-4 record this past season. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Brakefield averaged 17.1 points, 7.4 rebounds, 2.2 assists and 2.0 steals per game. MVP of the Big South Shootout as well as the ARS/Rescue Rooter National Hoopfest in Tampa, he is ranked as the nation's No. 17 recruit in the Class of 2020 by ESPN.

A devoted member of his church youth group, Brakefield has served Thanksgiving dinners to needy families and has volunteered locally on behalf of an animal shelter as well as youth basketball camps. "Brakefield is tough, physical, shoots the ball well and can finish at the rim," said Sean McAloon, head coach at IMG Academy. "He's a player you definitely have to game-plan for—big enough to post you up and good enough to beat you outside. He's a certified high major Division 1 player."

Brakefield has maintained a 3.19 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his 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 Brakefield joins Gatorade West Virginia Boys Basketball Players of the Year Luke Frampton (2016-17, Poca High School), and Chase Harler (2015-16 & 2014-15, Wheeling Central Catholic High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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

###