

## LA JOLLA COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE CALIFORNIA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

**CHICAGO** (March 6, 2020) — In its 35<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Te-Hina Paopao of La Jolla Country Day School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade California Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Paopao is the first Gatorade California Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from La Jolla Country Day 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 Paopao as California’s best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, Paopao joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill High School, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville High School, N.C.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central High School, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo High School, Calif.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis High School, Ind.), Katie Smith (1991-92, Logan High School, Ohio) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside High School, Calif.).

The 5-foot-10 senior guard had led the Torreyes to a 30-1 record and the Open Division state tournament at the time of her selection. Paopao averaged 22.3 points, 7.8 rebounds, 4.3 assists and 3.1 steals through 31 games. The Coastal League Player of the Year, she was MVP of the Nike Tournament of Champions and is a finalist for the Naismith High School Girls Player of the Year trophy. Paopao was chosen to play in both the McDonald’s All-American Game and the Jordan Brand Classic.

A devoted member of her church youth group, Paopao has volunteered locally feeding the homeless and assisting at a senior living facility. “Te-Hina is just something special,” said Jackie Turpin, head coach at Cathedral Catholic High. “She has a great stroke from mid-range and from deep, she’s very crafty getting to the rim and she makes everyone around her better. Her form after two ACL injuries is amazing; it’s like they never happened.”

Paopao has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Oregon 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 and field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Paopao joins Gatorade California Girls Basketball Players of the Year Haley Jones (2018-19 & 2017-18, Archbishop Mitty High School), Destiny Littleton (2016-17, The Bishop’s School), Sabrina Ionescu (2015-16, Miramonte High School), and Katie Lou Samuelson (2014-15 & 2013-14, Mater Dei High School) as athletes who have won the basketball award since its inception in 2007.

As a part of Gatorade’s cause marketing platform “Play it Forward,” Paopao also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She 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](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](https://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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