

## WILSON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA 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 **Loyal McQueen of Wilson High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. McQueen is the first Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Wilson 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 McQueen as South Carolina'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, McQueen 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-8 senior guard led the Tigers to a 22-4 record and the Class 4A state quarterfinals. McQueen averaged 27.3 points, 4.2 assists, 4.0 rebounds and 2.2 steals. A three-time South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association All-State selection, McQueen surpassed 2,000 career points this year and scored 52 points in a single game. She is ranked as the nation's No. 13 guard and the No. 58 overall recruit in the Class of 2020 by Prospects Nation.

The class president at her school, McQueen also donates her time to the Mount Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church as a youth usher and to the Young People's Division. She has volunteered locally at elementary schools with Read Across America. "Take it from a coach that has had to go up against her, Loyal gave us all kinds of fits," said Kevin Robinson, head coach at West Florence High. "You can never really stop a player like that, you can only hope to contain her. With Loyal, you could throw different defenses at her, and it wouldn't matter because she also has that decision-making ability to find a teammate. You can never really gameplan for Loyal McQueen."

McQueen has maintained a weighted 4.07 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at Georgia Institute of Technology 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.

McQueen joins Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Players of the Year Danae McNeal (2018-19, Swansea High School), Amari Young (2017-18, North Augusta High School), Jaelynn Murray (2016-17, Dreher High School), Jhileiya Dunlap (2015-16, Dreher High School), Kionna Jeter (2014-15, Spartanburg High School), and A'ja Wilson (2013-14, Heathwood Hall Episcopal 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," McQueen 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).

###