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**GREAT FALLS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® MONTANA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 17, 2016) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Brendan Howard of Great Falls High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Montana Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Howard is the third Gatorade Montana Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Great Falls 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 court, distinguishes Howard as Montana'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, Howard joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.), Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.) and Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas).

The 6-foot-6, 205-pound junior forward led the Bison to a 13-9 record and the quarterfinals of the Class AA state tournament this past season. Howard averaged 25.1 points, 10.4 rebounds and 1.8 assists per game. He is a two-time First Team All-State honoree and was selected to the USA TODAY American Family Insurance ALL-USA Montana First Team as a freshman and sophomore.

Howard has maintained a 3.85 GPA in the classroom. A mentor for younger students, he has volunteered locally on behalf of a food pantry, the Salvation Army and youth sports programs.

"Howard is a player you have to double team or he'll kill you," said John Hollow, head coach at Helena High. "He just plays hard and he's a great rebounder. It's almost impossible to keep him off the glass."

Howard 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 high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), 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.

Howard joins recent Gatorade Montana Boys Basketball Players of the Year Tres Tinkle (2014-15 & 2013-14, Hellgate High School), Daine Muller (2012-13, Skyview High School), Danny Robison (2011-12, Billings West High School), Tanner Roderick (2010-11, Bozeman High School), Josh Huestis (2009-10 & 2008-09, C.M. Russell High School), Andy Garland (2007-08, Sentinel High School), and Derek Selvig (2006-07, Dawson County High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit [www.gatorade.com/poy](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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