

**Contact: John Manzo (312-729-3656)**

**BISHOP HENDRICKEN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® RHODE ISLAND 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 Justin Mazzulla of Bishop Hendricken High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Mazzulla is the fifth Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Bishop Hendricken 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 Mazzulla as Rhode Island'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, Mazzulla 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-3, 185-pound junior guard led the Hawks to a 23-6 record and the Open State Tournament championship this past season. Mazzulla averaged 15.8 points, 10.6 rebounds, 3.0 assists, 2.0 steals and 1.1 blocks per game and was named the state championship game's MVP. He is a First Team All-State selection and played for the AAU national champion Boston Amateur Basketball Club last summer.

Mazzulla has maintained a weighted 3.50 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on fundraising campaigns to benefit homeless shelters and food banks in addition to donating his time as a youth basketball coach and referee.

"Justin Mazzulla has a great skill set and a high basketball IQ," said Charlie Holliday, head coach of Mount Pleasant High. "Justin has destroyed us when we played Hendricken."

Mazzulla 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.

Mazzulla joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Basketball Players of the Year Corey Daugherty (2014-15, Barrington High School), Bonzie Colson (2013-14 & 2012-13, St. Andrew's School), Jarell Lawson (2011-12, Central High School), Michael Carter-Williams (2010-11 & 2009-10, St. Andrew's School), Jay Jeannotte (2008-09, Narragansett High School), Ashton Watkins (2007-08, Classical High School), and Rakim Sanders (2006-07, St. Andrew's 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).

###