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**WHEELING CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® WEST VIRGINIA 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 Chase Harler of Wheeling Central Catholic High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade West Virginia Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Harler is the first Gatorade West Virginia Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Wheeling Central Catholic 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 Harler 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, Harler 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-4, 190-pound senior guard has led the Maroon Knights to a 21-2 record and a berth in the Class A state tournament against Parkersburg Catholic, scheduled for March 17. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Harler currently averages 24.4 points, 7.0 rebounds, 2.4 assists and 1.4 blocks per game. The USA TODAY American Family Insurance ALL-USA West Virginia Player of the Year, he is also a two-time First Team All-State selection.

Harler has maintained a 3.96 GPA in the classroom. He has served as a tutor in his school and has volunteered locally on behalf of food-donation drives.

"Harler is the only player I've seen this year who can control a game without scoring a lot of points," said Rob Strcula, head coach at Parkersburg Catholic. "He's very unselfish and he does what he has to do to help his team win, whether it means he has to score 40 points or 15. He has a very balanced game and he can even take total control at the defensive end of the floor."

Harler has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at West Virginia University 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.

Two-time winner Harler joins Gatorade West Virginia Boys Basketball Players of the Year Montaque Gill-Caesar (2013-14, Huntington St. Joseph Prep.), Andrew Wiggins (2012-13 & 2011-12, Huntington Prep.), Chase Fischer (2010-11, Ripley High School), Noah Cottrill (2009-10, Logan High School), Aaron Dobson (2008-09, South Charleston High School), Bryant Irwin (2007-08, Bridgeport Senior High School), and Patrick Patterson (2006-07, Huntington 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).