

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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

**OLIVE BRANCH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® MISSISSIPPI GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (March 13, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Myah Taylor of Olive Branch High School** as its **2016-17 Gatorade Mississippi Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Taylor is the first Gatorade Mississippi Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Olive Branch 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 Taylor as Mississippi's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Taylor joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Maya Moore (2005-06, Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-7 senior point guard had led the Conquistadors to a 32-1 record and a berth in the Class 6A state final at the time of her selection. Taylor averaged 21.6 points, 7.5 assists and seven steals while shooting 48 percent from inside the arc through 33 games. The state's two-time returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, she is ranked as the nation's No. 49 recruit in the Class of 2017 by [espnW HoopGurlz](#).

A member of the National Honor Society, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and her church choir, Taylor has volunteered locally on behalf of the YMCA and as a youth basketball coach. "Myah Taylor is the epitome of a true point guard," said Sylvester Kilgore, head coach of Holly Springs High. "She is a leader who makes her teammates better and she is an even better young lady with exceptional character."

Taylor has maintained a 4.10 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Mississippi State 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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Three-time winner Taylor joins Gatorade Mississippi Girls Basketball Players of the Year Victoria Vivians (2013-14 & 2011-12, Scott Central High School), Christa Reed (2012-13, Bay High School), Krista Donald (2010-11, Lake High School), Valencia McFarland (2009-10 & 2008-09, Raymond High School), and April Sykes (2007-08 & 2006-07, East Oktibbeha County High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Myah will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants – one for each sport – will be announced throughout the year.

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).

###