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**KIRKWOOD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® MISSOURI GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 13, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Lauryn Miller of Kirkwood High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Missouri Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Miller is the first Gatorade Missouri Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Kirkwood 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 Miller as Missouri'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, Miller 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 6-foot-2 senior forward had led the Pioneers to a 24-3 record and a berth in the first round of the Class 5 state tournament at the time of her selection. Miller averaged 18.4 points, 11.3 rebounds, 2.6 blocks, 1.8 steals and 1.4 assists through 27 games. An All-State honoree as a sophomore, Miller missed most of her junior year with a knee injury. She returned late in the 2015-16 season and helped lead Kirkwood to the Class 5 state title game.

A member of Quill and Scroll, an international high school journalism honor society, Miller has volunteered locally with the Special Olympics and has donated her time to multiple community-service initiatives through the Kirkwood High National Honor Society. "Lauryn Miller can post up and score with her back to the basket and she has extended her range to the 3-point line," said Dan Rolfes, head coach of Incarnate Word Academy. "She is a good shot-blocker and rebounds well on both ends."

Miller has maintained a weighted 3.98 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at UCLA beginning 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.

Miller joins recent Gatorade Missouri Girls Basketball Players of the Year Taylor Baur (2015-16, MICDS), Napheesa Collier (2014-15 & 2012-13, Incarnate Word Academy), Sophie Cunningham (2013-14, Rock Bridge High School), Maddie Stock (2011-12, St. Joseph's Academy), Shelby Winkelmann (2010-11, Hermann High School), Jazmin Hitchens (2009-10, Incarnate Word Academy), Katherine Harry (2008-09, Rock Bridge), Kathleen Scheer (2007-08, New Haven), and Tyra White (2006-07, Hickman Mills) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Lauryn 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.

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