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**CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® NORTH CAROLINA 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 Mikayla Boykin of Clinton High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade North Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Boykin is the third Gatorade North Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Clinton 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 Boykin as North Carolina'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, Boykin 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-9 senior guard had led the Dark Horses to a 29-2 record and a berth in the Class 2A state championship game at the time of her selection. Boykin averaged 38.1 points, 14.0 rebounds, 6.5 assists and 5.8 steals through 31 games. A First Team All-State honoree as a freshman—and having missed her sophomore and junior seasons due to injury—she is the Four County Conference Player of the Year and was named Most Outstanding Player at the John Wall Holiday Invitational. Boykin is ranked as the nation's No. 18 recruit in the Class of 2017 by Blue Star Basketball.

Boykin has volunteered locally on behalf of youth basketball programs and a toy collection drive for needy children. "Boykin is a great player, the best high school player I've seen in 21 years of coaching," said William Jeffers, head coach at Wallace-Rose Hill High. "She can handle the ball with either hand, she can go inside or shoot the deep ball, and she's very cool under pressure. She can play on any level for any school in this state."

Boykin has maintained a weighted 3.97 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Duke 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.

Boykin joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Girls Basketball Players of the Year Erin Whalen (2015-16, Providence Day School), Stephanie Watts (2014-15, Weddington High School), Jatarie White (2013-14 & 2012-13, Providence Day School), Tiffany Mitchell (2011-12, Providence Day School), Cierra Burdick (2010-11 & 2009-10, Butler High School), Asia Williams (2008-09, Hillside High School), Candace Wood (2007-08, Victory Christian Center School), and Cetera DeGraffenreid (2006-07, Smoky Mountain High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Mikayla 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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