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**DREHER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® SOUTH 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 Jaelynn Murray of Dreher High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Murray is the third Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Dreher 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 Murray as South 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, Murray 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 and center averaged 23.9 points, 10.7 rebounds and 3.1 steals per game this past season, leading the Lady Blue Devils (13-10) to the Class AAAA state tournament. Also the 2016-17 South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association Girls Basketball Player of the Year, Murray concluded her prep career with 1,655 points.

Murray has volunteered locally on behalf of Resurrection Ministries, the Richland County Library, the Harvest Hope Food Bank and as part of flood disaster relief efforts. "Jaelynn Murray has been a joy to coach over the past four years," said Dreher head coach Teresa Jones. "She has been one of the top players in the state since her freshman year and has truly made her mark on girls' basketball in South Carolina."

Murray has maintained a 3.20 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of North Carolina 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.

Murray joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Players of the Year Jhileiya Dunlap (2015-16, Dreher High School), Kionna Jeter (2014-15, Spartanburg High School), A'ja Wilson (2013-14, Heathwood Hall Episcopal School), Alaina Coates (2012-13, Dutch Fork High School), Asia Dozier (2011-12, Spring Valley High School), Xylina McDaniel (2010-11, Spring Valley High School), Kayla Jenerette (2009-10, Travelers Rest High School), and Morgan Stroman (2008-09, 2007-08 & 2006-07, Lower Richland High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Jaelynn 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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