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**MONACAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® VIRGINIA 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 Megan Walker of Monacan High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Walker is the first Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Monacan 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 Walker as Virginia'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, Walker 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 state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-1 senior guard had led the Chiefs to a 29-0 record and a berth in the Group 4A state championship game at the time of her selection. Walker averaged 25.5 points, 7.5 rebounds, 3.1 steals and 1.2 assists through 29 games. A McDonald's High School All-American Game selection and a two-time Group 4A Player of the Year, Walker was a member of the USA Basketball Women's National Team that won the 2016 FIBA Americas U18 Women's Championship. Rated as the No. 1 recruit in the Class of 2017 by Blue Star Basketball Report, she entered the state final with 2,027 points in her prep basketball career.

A member of the Monacan High Healthy Allies, a booster group that supports the school's Health and Physical Therapy Specialty Center, Walker has volunteered locally at a daycare center and as a youth basketball coach. She has also donated her time as part of multiple community-service initiatives through her church youth group. "Megan can do it all: score, pass, handle and defend," said Adam Layton, head coach of Midlothian High. "Megan could easily score 30-50 points a night, and she will if she needs to, but she is so unselfish as a player. She always tries to get others involved."

Walker has maintained a weighted 3.83 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Connecticut 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.

Walker joins Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Players of the Year Taja Cole (2014-15, L.C. Bird High School), Dorothy Adomako (2013-14, Cosby High School), Breyana Mason (2012-13, Forest Park High School), Caroline Coyer (2011-12, Oakton High School), Elizabeth Williams (2010-11 & 2009-10, Princess Anne High School), Tierra Ruffin-Pratt (2008-09 & 2007-08, T.C. Williams High School), and Jasmine Thomas (2006-07, Oakton High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Megan 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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