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**NINILCHIK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® ALASKA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 20, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Austin White of Ninilchik High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Alaska Boys Basketball Player of the Year. White is the first Gatorade Alaska Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Ninilchik 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 White as Alaska's best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, White joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Karl-Anthony Towns (2012-13 & 2013-14, St. Joseph HS, N.J.), Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.) and Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot-7, 205-pound senior forward had led the Wolverines to a 17-8 record and a berth in the Class 1A state tournament at the time of his selection. White averaged 17.3 points, 13.7 rebounds, 4.1 blocks and 3.7 assists through 25 games. The Class 1A State Tournament MVP as a junior, he is also the Peninsula Conference MVP and a two-time First Team All-State honoree.

White has volunteered locally on behalf of youth basketball programs. "White is a skilled 6-foot-7 kid who can put the ball on the floor, shoot it and post up," said Archie Young, head coach at Mt. Edgecumbe High, "And his best basketball is yet to come."

White has maintained a 3.99 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Alaska-Anchorage 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.

White joins recent Gatorade Alaska Boys Basketball Players of the Year Kamaka Hepa (2015-16 & 2014-15, Barrow High School), Scooter Bynum (2013-14, Monroe Catholic High School), Adam Klie (2012-13, Service High School), Connor Devine (2011-12, Wasilla High School), Devon Bookert (2010-11, West Anchorage High School), Kyle Fossman (2009-10, Haines High School), Ryan Hanley (2008-09, Dimond High School), Kevin Winford (2007-08, Bartlett High School), and Jesse Bean (2006-07, Wasilla High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Austin 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).