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**PACE ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® GEORGIA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 20, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Wendell Carter of Pace Academy as its 2016-17 Gatorade Georgia Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Carter is the first Gatorade Georgia Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Pace Academy.

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 Carter as Georgia'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, Carter 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-10, 262-pound senior forward led the Knights to a 26-8 record and the Class AAA state title this past season. Carter averaged 22.7 points, 15.5 rebounds and 5.8 blocks per game while shooting 63.9 percent from inside the arc. A 2017 McDonald's All-American Game selection and a Jordan Brand Classic game invitee, he is ranked as the nation's No. 3 recruit in the Class of 2017 by ESPN.

Carter has volunteered locally on behalf of Trees Atlanta, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America and the World Changers International Church. "Wendell Carter is the best basketball player I have seen in the last 20 years," said Anthony Stroud, head coach at Stone Mountain High. "His upside is tremendous. He is a good passer and can play inside or outside the paint. He is, in my opinion, the best player in the state."

Carter has maintained a 92.4 average in the classroom. He 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.

Carter joins recent Gatorade Georgia Boys Basketball Players of the Year Alterique Gilbert (2015-16, Miller Grove High School), Jaylen Brown (2014-15, Wheeler High School), Isaiah Wilkins (2013-14, Greater Atlanta Christian School), Brannen Greene (2012-13, Tift County High School), Tony Parker (2011-12, Miller Grove High School), Shannon Scott (2010-11, Milton High School), Ryan Harrow (2009-10, Walton High School), Derrick Favors (2008-09 & 2007-08, South Atlanta High School), and Gani Lawal (2006-07, Norcross High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Wendell 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.