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**ALBANY ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® NEW YORK 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 Hameir Wright of Albany Academy as its 2016-17 Gatorade New York Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Wright is the first Gatorade New York Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Albany 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 Wright as New York'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, Wright 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-8, 205-pound senior forward had led the Cadets to a 15-5 record and a berth in the Class A Federation Championships at the time of his selection. Wright averaged 16.7 points, 9.1 rebounds, 3.0 assists and 1.9 blocks through 20 games. The Class A Player of the Year, he was also MVP of the Federation Championships as a junior.

Wright has served as a mentor and peer tutor, and has volunteered locally on behalf of youth basketball camps. "Hameir Wright is an exceptional basketball player," said Mark Fruscio, head coach at Lansingburgh High. "He does so many things well on the court. He can rebound, shoot and handle the ball, making him a match-up nightmare. What is most impressive is that the game comes so easily to him that it's almost like he's doing everything while exerting very little effort."

Wright has maintained a B average in the classroom. He remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Wright joins recent Gatorade New York Boys Basketball Players of the Year Kevin Huerter (2015-16, Shenendehowa High School), Cheick Diallo (2014-15 & 2013-14, Our Savior New American School), Kentan Facey (2012-13, Long Island Lutheran High School), Omar Calhoun (2011-12, Christ the King Regional High School), Achraf Yacoubou (2010-11, Long Island Lutheran High School), Tobias Harris (2009-10, Half Hollow Hills High School West), Brandon Triche (2008-09, Jamesville-DeWitt High School), Sylven Landesberg (2007-08, Holy Cross High School), and Jonny Flynn (2006-07, Niagara Falls High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Hameir 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.