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**MOUNTAIN BROOK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® ALABAMA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 8, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Trendon Watford of Mountain Brook High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Alabama Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Watford is the first Gatorade Alabama Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Mountain Brook 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 field, distinguishes Watford as Alabama'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, Watford 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-9, 225-pound junior forward led the Spartans to a 34-4 record and a second straight Class 7A state championship this past season. Watford averaged 23.3 points, 12.3 rebounds, 3.0 assists, 2.2 blocks and 1.7 steals per game, including 26 points, 12 rebounds and five blocks in the title-game win over McGill-Toolen High. A nominee for the MaxPreps National Player of the Year, he is a two-time Class 7A State Tournament MVP.

Watford has volunteered locally as a summer basketball camp director and as a youth mentor. He has also donated his time as part of multiple community-service initiatives through his church. "I don't know of a player that has more of an impact on his team than Trendon does," said Donnie Quinn, head coach of Spain Park High. "He's virtually unstoppable in the paint but he also has a good 3-point game. He is the heart and soul of his team."

Watford has maintained a B average in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school 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.

Watford joins recent Gatorade Alabama Boys Basketball Players of the Year John Petty (2016-17 & 2015-16, Jemison High School), Josh Langford (2014-15 & 2012-13, Madison Academy), William Lee (2013-14, Dallas County High School), Craig Sword (2011-12, Carver High School), Levi Randolph (2010-11, Bob Jones High School), KT Harrell (2009-10, Brewbaker Technology Magnet High School), Jordan Swing (2008-09, Vestavia Hills High School), JaMychal Green (2007-08, St. Jude Educational Institute), and Justin Knox (2006-07, Tuscaloosa Central High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Trendon 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 the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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 <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.