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**GLENS FALLS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® NEW YORK 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 Joe Girard III of Glens Falls High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade New York Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Girard III is the first Gatorade New York Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Glens Falls 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 Girard III 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, Girard III 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-2, 185-pound junior guard led the Indians to a 20-3 record and the sectional semifinals this past season. Girard averaged 50.0 points, seven rebounds and six assists per game and shattered the state career scoring record—he will enter his senior season with 3,306 total points. A two-time First Team All-State honoree, he was also the Albany Times Union Player of the Year, the Foothills Council League MVP and a MaxPreps Second Team Sophomore All-American.

Also a football standout, Girard has served as an elementary school mentor and has volunteered locally on behalf of a soup kitchen, clothing donation drives and youth sports programs. "Girard doesn't have any weaknesses," said Doug Fraser, head coach at Queensbury High. "He's deadly off the bounce and he has range to 30 feet. He's mentally and physically tough, and he's improved as an athlete every year. It's scary to think that he's only a junior."

Girard has maintained an A-minus 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.

Girard III joins recent Gatorade New York Boys Basketball Players of the Year Hameir Wright (2016-17, Albany Academy), 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 West), Brandon Triche (2008-09, Jamesville-DeWitt High School), Sylven Landesberg (2007-08, Holy Cross High School), and Jonny Flynn (2006-07, Niagara Falls) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Joe 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/>.