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**HOULTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® MAINE GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 19, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Kolleen Bouchard of Houlton High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Maine Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Bouchard is the first Gatorade Maine Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Houlton 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 Bouchard as Maine's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Bouchard joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot senior point guard led the Shiretowners to a 21-1 record and the Class C state final this past season. Bouchard averaged 29.1 points, 10.1 rebounds, 5.5 assists, 3.3 steals and 2.9 blocks per game while shooting 56 percent from the field and 88 percent from the free-throw line. A four-year captain who was named the 2017-18 Miss Maine Basketball by the Maine Association of Basketball Coaches, Bouchard concluded her prep career with a school-record 2,046 points.

Bouchard is president of Houlton's chapter of the National Honor Society and class valedictorian. She is also a trumpet player in the school band. She has volunteered locally at the Elks Hoop Shoot Free Throw Contest and has donated her time at youth soccer and basketball camps, Special Olympics events and as a mentor in an after-school program. "I've never seen a girl dominate any more than Kolleen did this year," said Wendell Harvey, head coach at Hodgdon High. "In my opinion, and I've seen a lot of good players over a long period of time, but she's just on another level. A lot of fun to watch."

Bouchard has maintained a 97.09 average in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball at Bentley University in Massachusetts beginning 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.

Bouchard joins recent Gatorade Maine Girls Basketball Players of the Year Emily Esposito (2016-17, Gorham High School), Nia Irving (2015-16 & 2014-15, Lawrence High School), Allie Clement (2013-14 & 2012-13, Catherine McAuley High School), Meghan Gribbin (2011-12, Windham High School), Niki Taylor (2010-11 & 2009-10, York High School), Morgan Frame (2008-09, Waterville High School), Rachael Mack (2007-08, Cony High School), and Ashley Cimino (2006-07, McAuley High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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

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