

## **DIMOND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE ALASKA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (March 8, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Alissa Pili of Dimond High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Alaska Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Pili is the second Gatorade Alaska Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Dimond 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 Pili as Alaska's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, Pili joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Maya Moore (2005-06, Collins Hill High School, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville High School, N.C.), Candace Parker (2001-02, 2002-03 & 2003-04, Naperville Central High School, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo High School, Calif.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis High School, Ind.), Katie Smith (1991-92, Logan High School, Ohio) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside High School, Calif.).

The 6-foot senior forward had led the Lynx to a 23-3 record and a berth in the Class 4A regional tournament at the time of her selection. The state's two-time returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, Pili averaged 28.3 points, 16.6 rebounds, 3.1 assists and 2.4 steals through 26 games. She is a three-time First Team All-State honoree and the Cook Inlet Conference Player of the Year.

Pili has volunteered locally on behalf of the YMCA, the Special Olympics and youth basketball programs. "Alissa Pili is a fantastic basketball player," said Larry Wilson, head coach at South Anchorage High. "She's a great scorer, she grabs a lot of rebounds and she's stronger than everybody. What gets overshadowed by all the points is her passing, which is the best I've seen up here."

Pili has maintained a 3.05 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Southern California 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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Three-time winner Pili joins Gatorade Alaska Girls Basketball Players of the Year Ruthy Hebard (2015-16, 2014-15 & 2013-14, West Valley High School) as athletes who have won the basketball award.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Pili also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [www.Gatorade.com/POY](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

###