

**BRADEN RIVER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE FLORIDA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 8, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **O'Mariah Gordon of Braden River High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Florida Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Gordon is the first Gatorade Florida Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Braden River 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 Gordon as Florida'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, Gordon 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 5-foot-6 sophomore guard averaged 29.7 points, 6.8 assists, 6.6 rebounds and 5.3 steals per game this past season, leading the Pirates (24-2) to the Class 8A state quarterfinals. Gordon hit 56.8 percent of her field goals, including 46.5 percent from behind the 3-point line. She recorded a quadruple-double with 27 points, 11 assists, 10 rebounds and 10 steals in a 74-27 win over Venice High on Jan. 17, the same night she scored her 1,000th point. Gordon concluded her sophomore year with 1,454 points in her prep basketball career.

Gordon has volunteered locally as part of community beautification projects and has donated her time as a youth basketball coach. "O'Mariah is probably the best player I've ever coached against in my 28 years of coaching," said Wade McVay, head coach of Sarasota High. "She's a phenomenal player with a high basketball IQ."

Gordon has maintained a weighted 3.77 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her junior 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. 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.

Gordon joins Gatorade Florida Girls Basketball Players of the Year Destanni Henderson (2017-18, Fort Myers High School), Rennia Davis (2016-17, Ribault High School), Jazmine Jones (2015-16, FAMU Developmental Research School), and Beatrice Mompremier (2014-15 & 2013-14, Miami Senior High School) as athletes who have recently won the basketball award.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Gordon 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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