

ROCK ISLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE ILLINOIS 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 **Brea Beal of Rock Island High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Illinois Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Beal is the first Gatorade Illinois Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Rock Island 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 Beal as Illinois' 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, Beal 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 state's two-time returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-1 senior guard averaged 24.8 points, 14.0 rebounds, 4.5 assists, 3.6 blocks and 2.6 steals per game this past season, leading the Rocks (30-2) to the Class 4A Super-Sectionals. Already a two-time Miss Basketball winner and a three-time First Team All-State honoree, Beal is a McDonald's All-American Game selection. She concluded her prep basketball career with 2,720 points and 1,285 rebounds.

Beal has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach. "Brea impacts the game in all the right ways," said Marcus Mann, head coach of Normal Community High School. "She plays with and through her teammates, utilizing opportunities for herself as well as the other players to be successful."

Beal has maintained a weighted 3.42 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of South Carolina 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. 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 Beal joins Gatorade Illinois Girls Basketball Players of the Year Kiara Lewis (2015-16, Whitney M. Young Magnet School), Haley Gorecki (2014-15, William Fremd High School), and Tyra Buss (2013-14, Mt. Carmel High School) as athletes who have recently won the basketball award.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Beal 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.