

CENTURY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NORTH DAKOTA 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 **Lauren Ware of Century High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade North Dakota Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Ware is the second Gatorade North Dakota Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Century 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 Ware as North Dakota'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, Ware 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-5 junior forward and center had led the Patriots to a 24-0 record and the Class A quarterfinals at the time of her selection. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, Ware averaged 17.3 points, 11.1 rebounds, 4.6 blocks and 2.1 assists through 24 games. A three-time All-Conference honoree, she was also a First Team All-State selection and is ranked as the nation's No. 13 recruit in the Class of 2020 by Prospects Nation.

Also the state's Gatorade Volleyball Player of the Year, Ware has volunteered locally with Peer to Peer, mentoring students with disabilities. She has also donated her time to the Bismarck Emergency Food Pantry and Salvation Army. "Lauren Ware is the most dominant rim protector I've encountered in 13 years coaching," said Jim Petrik, head coach at Legacy High. "She gets numerous blocks, and the shots she doesn't block, she alters. She's also dominant around the rim offensively, and she's developed a 3-point shot as well."

Ware has maintained a 3.89 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her 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. 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.

Two-time winner Ware joins Gatorade North Dakota Girls Basketball Players of the Year Tylee Irwin (2016-17, Wahpeton High School), Sarah Jacobson (2015-16, Shanley High School), Hannah Stewart (2014-15, Bishop Ryan Catholic High School), and Sarah Jacobson (2013-14, Shanley High School) as athletes who have recently won the basketball award.

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