

NEUMANN-GORETTI HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA 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 **Diamond Johnson of Neumann-Goretti High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Johnson is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Neumann-Goretti 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 Johnson as Pennsylvania'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, Johnson 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 junior guard had led the Saints to an 18-8 record and a berth in the Class 3A state tournament at the time of her selection. Johnson averaged 28.1 points, 5.8 rebounds, 4.5 assists and 4.0 steals through 26 games. The MVP of the Philadelphia Catholic League, she scored 54 points in the city championship game and is ranked as the nation's No. 14 recruit in the Class of 2020 by ESPN.

Johnson has donated her time as a mentor for young children and has volunteered locally on behalf of the Christopher's Footprints Child Care Center. "Diamond Johnson is pretty much unstoppable," said Beulah Osueke, head coach at West Catholic High. "She's small and quick, she's got a deadly floater and she can shoot from well behind the line. She changes the entire dynamic of that team."

Johnson has maintained a 3.57 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.

Johnson joins Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Basketball Players of the Year Alli Campbell (2017-18, Bellwood-Antis High School), Sam Breen (2016-17, Cardinal Wuerl North Catholic High School), Kelly Jekot (2015-16 & 2014-15, Cumberland Valley High School), and Erin Mathias (2013-14, Fox Chapel Area High School) as athletes who have recently won the basketball award.

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

###