

PAUL VI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 **Ashley Owusu of Paul VI Catholic High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Owusu is the first Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Paul VI Catholic 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 Owusu as Virginia'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, Owusu 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-11 senior guard led the Panthers to a 27-7 record and a fourth-straight Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association Division I state championship this past season. Owusu averaged 22.0 points, 9.2 rebounds, 3.9 assists and 1.9 steals per game. A McDonald's All-American Game selection and ranked as the No. 4 recruit in the Class of 2019 by ProspectsNation.com, she is a four-time All-Washington Catholic Athletic Conference First Team honoree.

Owusu has volunteered locally with the Special Olympics and as a youth basketball coach. "Ashley is the rare combination of total power, speed and finesse with a complete skill set," said Jonathan Scribner, head coach of St. John's College High School. "She is a difficult matchup for any position guarding her."

Owusu has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Maryland 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.

Owusu joins Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Players of the Year Samantha Brunelle (2017-18, William Monroe High School), Megan Walker (2016-17 & 2015-16, Monacan High School), Taja Cole (2014-15, L.C. Bird High School), and Dorothy Adomako (2013-14, Cosby High School) as athletes who have recently won the basketball award.

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

###