

CASHMERE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE WASHINGTON 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 **Hailey Van Lith of Cashmere High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Washington Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Van Lith is the first Gatorade Washington Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Cashmere 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 Van Lith as Washington'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, Van Lith 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-9 junior guard led the Bulldogs to a 23-3 record and the Class 1A semifinals this past season. Van Lith averaged 34.4 points, 8.3 rebounds, 5.2 steals and 4.9 assists per game. A member of the gold-medal winning USA Basketball U17 Women's World Cup Team, she also won a gold medal for the U.S. at the 2018 Youth Olympic Games 3x3 competition. She is a three-time Caribou Trail League MVP and was the Class 1A Player of the Year as a sophomore.

A peer math tutor in her school, Van Lith has volunteered locally on behalf of her church's youth ministry. "Hailey Van Lith is the best player, boy or girl, that I've coached against or even seen in the 17 years I've coached in the state of Washington, from 1A to 3A," said KC Ahrens, head coach at Deer Park High. "Her speed and strength are things that jump out at you in person. She's unbelievable."

Van Lith has maintained a 4.0 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.

Van Lith joins Gatorade Washington Girls Basketball Players of the Year Lexie Hull (2017-18 & 2016-17, Central Valley High School), Mikayla Pivec (2015-16 & 2014-15, Lynnwood High School), and Brittany McPhee (2013-14, Mt. Rainier High School) as athletes who have recently won the basketball award.

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