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## **LITTLE ELM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE® TEXAS BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (March 15, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **R.J. Hampton of Little Elm High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Texas Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Hampton is the first Gatorade Texas Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Little Elm 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 Hampton as Texas' best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, Hampton joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Karl-Anthony Towns (2012-13 & 2013-14, St. Joseph High School, N.J.), Dwight Howard (2003-04, Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln High School, Texas), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood High School, Calif.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington High School, Colo.) and Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame High School, Calif.).

The 6-foot-6, 195-pound junior guard averaged 32.0 points, 9.7 rebounds, 6.4 assists and 3.9 steals per game this past season, leading the Lobos (24-10) to the second round of the Class 5A, Region 1 tournament. Hampton won gold medals with Team USA at the 16U FIBA World Cup in 2017, and at the 17U FIBA World Cup in 2018. The Texas Association of Basketball Coaches Class 5A Player of the Year in 2018, he concluded his junior year with 2,854 career points.

A member of the Little Elm High Athletic Council, Hampton has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach. "R.J. is probably the best player I have ever coached against," said Harold Jackson, head coach of Denton High. "He's athletic and really can finish around the basket. And he's a good shooter from 3-point range as well."

Hampton has maintained a weighted 3.88 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his 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. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Hampton joins Gatorade Texas Boys Basketball Players of the Year Quentin Grimes (2017-18, The Woodlands College Park High School), Marcus Garrett (2016-17, Skyline High School), De'Aaron Fox (2015-16, Cypress Lakes High School), and Admon Gilder (2014-15, James Madison High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Hampton also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He 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](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](https://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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