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NICOLET HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE® WISCONSIN BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (March 15, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Jalen Johnson of Nicolet High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Johnson is the first Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Nicolet 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 Wisconsin's 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, Johnson 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-8, 215-pound junior forward had led the Knights to a 25-1 record, a No. 7 ranking in the USA TODAY's Super 25 and a berth in the Division 2 state semifinals at the time of his selection. Johnson averaged 20.2 points, 11.1 rebounds, 6.1 assists and 2.5 steals through 26 games. A First Team All-State and First Team All-Conference honoree, he is ranked as the nation's No. 3 recruit in the Class of 2020 by ESPN.

Johnson has volunteered locally on behalf of an elementary school reading initiative, a Christmas toy giveaway program and youth basketball camps. "Johnson is a competitor with tremendous skill and a great feel for the game," said Damon Jones, head coach at Grafton High. "He's the leader of that group, and has propelled them onto a national stage."

Johnson has maintained a B average 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.

Johnson joins Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Basketball Players of the Year Tyrese Haliburton (2017-18, Oshkosh North High School), Kobe King (2016-17, La Crosse Central High School), Sam Hauser (2015-16, Stevens Point Area Senior High School), and Henry Ellenson (2014-15, Rice Lake High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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