

**VALLEY VISTA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ARIZONA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 27, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Marisa Davis of Valley Vista High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Arizona Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Davis is the second Gatorade Arizona Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Valley Vista 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 Davis as Arizona'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 June, Davis joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Skylar Diggins-Smith (2008-09, Washington High School, Ind.), Nneka Ogwumike (2007-08, Cy-Fair High School, Texas), Maya Moore (2006-07, Collins Hill High School, Ga.), Candace Parker (2002-03 & 2003-04, Naperville Central High School, Ill.), and Lisa Leslie (1989-90, Morningside High School, Calif.).

The 6-foot-1 senior forward and guard led the Monsoon to a 17-1 record and the Class 6A state championship this past season. Davis averaged 17.9 points, 6.8 rebounds and 2.1 steals per game. A two-time First Team All-Arizona selection, she was also the Class 6A Player of the Year and the West Valley Preps Player of the Year.

Davis has volunteered locally on behalf of a food bank, the Special Olympics and a program that cares for rescue horses. "Davis is very talented, athletic and has a high basketball IQ," said Jennifer Gillom, head coach at Xavier College Prep. "She's a strong rebounder and great defender, and offensively she seems comfortable at any position."

Davis has maintained a 3.61 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Washington 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 works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Davis joins recent Gatorade Arizona Girls Basketball Players of the Year Alyssa Brown (2019-20, Sahuaro High School), Dominique Phillips (2018-19, Millennium High School), Taylor Chavez (2017-18, Valley Vista High School), and Shaylee Gonzales (2016-17, Mesquite High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Davis has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Davis is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

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

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