

**MOUNTAIN VIEW HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE IDAHO 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 Naya Ojukwu of Mountain View High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Idaho Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Ojukwu is the third Gatorade Idaho Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Mountain View 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 Ojukwu as Idaho'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, Ojukwu 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 junior power forward led the Mavericks to a 20-2 record and their second straight Class 5A state title this past season, averaging 24.2 points, 10 rebounds, 1.8 blocks, 1.3 steals and 1.1 assists per game. The Class 5A Player of the Year and MaxPreps Idaho Player of the Year, Ojukwu was named Class 5A First-Team All-State for a third time. After breaking the state tournament scoring record with 87 points over three games, Ojukwu earned State Tournament MVP honors from Idahosports.com.

Ojukwu has volunteered locally with the 7Cares Idaho Cares food drive in Meridian. She has also donated her time as a youth basketball coach, a Special Olympics referee, a church camp leader and as a youth minister. "Naya is the most dominant player in Idaho, hands down," said Kym Bridges, head coach at Boise High School. "She's kind of next level all the time. Any guard who throws it in her vicinity, she grabs it. If you don't box her out, she'll hurt you. Without a doubt, she is the player of the year."

Ojukwu has maintained a weighted 3.39 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. 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.

Ojukwu joins recent Gatorade Idaho Girls Basketball Players of the Year Peyton McFarland (2019-20, Boise High School), Darian White (2018-19, Mountain View High School), Melody Kempton (2017-18, Post Falls High School), and Tori Williams (2016-17, Centennial High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Ojukwu has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Ojukwu 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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