

**ARCHBISHOP WOOD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 27, 2021) — In its 36<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Kaitlyn Orihel of Archbishop Wood High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Orihel is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Archbishop Wood 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 Orihel as Pennsylvania'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, Orihel 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 5-foot-10 senior guard led the Vikings to a 17-2 record and the Class 4A state championship this past season. Orihel averaged 16.1 points, 4.0 rebounds and 2.3 steals per game. The Class 4A Player of the Year, she is a three-time First Team All-State selection and a four-time First Team All-Philadelphia Catholic League honoree.

Orihel has volunteered locally on behalf of Athletes Helping Athletes and the Special Olympics. "Kaitlyn Orihel was the best player in the state from game one all the way through the state championship," said Doug Chuzie, head coach at Villa Maria Academy. "She can score at all three levels. Defensively, she can guard the one through the five, and she simply plays harder than all her opponents."

Orihel has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Villanova University 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.

Orihel joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Basketball Players of the Year Diamond Johnson (2019-20 & 2018-19, Neumann-Goretti High School), Alli Campbell (2017-18, Bellwood-Antis High School), and Sam Breen (2016-17, Cardinal Wuerl North Catholic High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Orihel has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Orihel 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 [www.playeroftheyear.gatorade.com](http://www.playeroftheyear.gatorade.com), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

###