

**ST. THOMAS MORE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH DAKOTA 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 Haleigh Timmer of St. Thomas More High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade South Dakota Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Timmer is the first Gatorade South Dakota Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Thomas More 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 Timmer as South Dakota'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, Timmer joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Skylar Diggins-Smith (2008-09, Washington High School, Ind.), Nneka Ogumike (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-11 senior guard averaged 20.7 points, 6.6 rebounds, 3.4 assists and 2.7 steals per game this past season in leading the Cavaliers to a 22-3 record and the Class A state semifinals. The MaxPreps South Dakota Girls Basketball Player of the Year and a three-time Class A First-Team All-State selection, Timmer posted a .589 field goal percentage, including .519 from behind the arc. Named South Dakota Miss Basketball for 2021 by Hansen Anderson Basketball, Timmer finished her high school career with 1,754 points.

A four-time All-Black Hills Conference selection in track and a three-time All-BHC pick in volleyball, Timmer volunteers locally at Rapid City Public Library and is an active member of Calvary Lutheran Church. She has also donated her time initiating a book drive throughout all of Rapid City Area Schools, collecting and donating over 1,000 books to various organizations. "When I think of trying to game-plan and coach against St. Thomas More and Haleigh, it just didn't seem like there was any one area that you could try to exploit," said Tim Hanson, head coach at Lead-Deadwood High. "I've come across other really talented ballplayers and there's a way you might have a modicum of success trying to contain them. With Haleigh, it's death by 1,000 cuts. She's so well rounded and talented in all aspects of the game."

Timmer has maintained a 4.04 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at South Dakota State 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.

Timmer joins recent Gatorade South Dakota Girls Basketball Players of the Year Emma Ronsiek (2019-20, O'Gorman High School), Madysen Vlastuin (2018-19, Lennox High School), Paiton Burckhard (2017-18, Aberdeen Central High School), and Myah Selland (2016-17, Sanborn Central/Woonsocket), among the state's list of former award winners.

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