

**CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE VERMONT 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 Catherine Gilwee of Champlain Valley Union High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Vermont Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Gilwee is the fifth Gatorade Vermont Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Champlain Valley Union 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 Gilwee as Vermont'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, Gilwee 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-8 senior guard led the Redhawks to a 9-0 record this past season, averaging 12.1 points, 5.6 assists, 3.4 rebounds and 3.1 steals per game. Gilwee was named Miss Basketball by the Burlington Free Press and is a three-time First Team All-State and First Team All-Metro honoree. She guided Champlain Valley Union to a 30-0 mark over her final two years, though both postseasons were ended by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A member of her school's Athletic Leadership Council, Gilwee has served as a youth soccer coach and has volunteered locally on behalf of Bring Change to Mind, a school organization that focuses on eliminating stigmas surrounding mental health issues. "Catherine Gilwee is far and away the best player in this state," said Aurie Thibault, head coach at Rice Memorial High. "There's nobody else even close. Her shooting is really special, and she is one of the smartest players I've ever seen."

Gilwee has maintained a weighted 4.22 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Vermont 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.

Gilwee joins recent Gatorade Vermont Girls Basketball Players of the Year Olivia Rockwood (2019-20, Windsor High School), and Sadie Stetson (2018-19, 2017-18 & 2016-17, St. Johnsbury Academy), among the state's list of former award winners.

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

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