

**PAUL VI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 Isabella Perkins of Paul VI Catholic High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Perkins is the second Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Paul VI Catholic 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 Perkins as Virginia'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, Perkins 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-9 senior guard averaged 16.0 points and 3.7 rebounds per game this past season, leading the Panthers (11-1) to the championship game of the GEICO Nationals tournament. Perkins also chipped in 3.4 assists and 3.3 steals per game. A four-year starter, Perkins led Paul VI to three straight Virginia Independent School Athletic Association Division 1 state championships. As a junior, she was a VISAA Division 1 First Team All-State honoree and a Washington Catholic Athletic Conference Honorable Mention selection.

Perkins has volunteered locally with Paul VI's peer mentor program and as a youth basketball coach. "Perkins was the head on the floor—the offense ran through her," said Hilda Hankerson, head coach of Westlake (Ga.) High, which beat Paul VI in the GEICO Nationals title game. "She was their MVP."

Perkins has maintained a 3.07 GPA in the classroom. She remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Perkins joins recent Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Players of the Year Jasha Clinton (2019-20, Princess Anne High School), Ashley Owusu (2018-19, Paul VI Catholic High School), Samantha Brunelle (2017-18, William Monroe High School), and Megan Walker (2016-17, Monacan High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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