

**MONTVERDE ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE FLORIDA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 4, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Caleb Houston of Montverde Academy as its 2020-21 Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Houston is the fourth Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Montverde Academy.

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 Houston as Florida's best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Houston joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Jayson Tatum (2015-16, Chaminade College Preparatory School, Mo.), Karl-Anthony Towns (2012-13 & 2013-14, St. Joseph High School, N.J.), Jabari Parker (2011-12, Simeon Career Academy, Ill.) and Dwight Howard (2003-04, Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.).

The 6-foot-8, 210-pound senior forward led the Eagles to a 26-1 record, a No. 1 national ranking and the Geico High School Nationals championship this past season. Houston averaged 13.2 points, 4.6 rebounds, 1.7 assists and 1.2 steals per game. A McDonald's All-American Game selection, Houston was one of 10 semifinalists for the Naismith High School Trophy. He also won a silver medal at the 2019 FIBA U16 Americas Championship as a member of Team Canada and is ranked as the nation's No. 7 recruit in the Class of 2021 by ESPN.com.

A Toronto native, Houston has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach. "One of the top shooters in the high school game, Houston brings a shot-making prowess to the game as well as a stoic expression," said Paul Biancardi, ESPN National Recruiting Director. "His positional size and movement with the ball along with shooting the ball from the same lift pocket makes him an accurate marksman and hard to defend."

Houston has maintained a weighted A-minus average in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Michigan 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.

Houston joins recent Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Players of the Year Cade Cunningham (2019-20, Montverde Academy), Vernon Carey Jr. (2018-19, NSU University School), R.J. Barrett (2017-18, Montverde Academy), and Chaundee Brown (2016-17, The First Academy), among the state's list of former award winners.

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

###