

**BLACKHAWK CHRISTIAN SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE INDIANA 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 Furst of Blackhawk Christian School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Indiana Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Furst is the first Gatorade Indiana Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Blackhawk Christian 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 Furst as Indiana'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, Furst 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-10, 225-pound senior forward led the Braves to a 28-3 record and the Class 2A state championship. Furst averaged 21.4 points, 14.1 rebounds, 3.0 assists and 2.2 blocks per game, and he recorded 19 points, seven boards and six blocks in Blackhawk's 55-40 win over Parke Heritage High in the state final. Named Indiana's Mr. Basketball, Furst is ranked as the nation's No. 74 recruit in the Class of 2021 by ESPN.com. A four-time First Team All-State selection, he concluded his prep basketball career with 2,067 points and 1,254 rebounds.

Furst has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach, and he has donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church. "A coachable and hard-nosed player, Caleb has transformed his frame to punish opponents inside," said Paul Biancardi, ESPN National Recruiting Director. "He runs hard to get easy baskets and shows quickness and mobility with bounce to change or block a shot. He influences the game in the paint and at the rim."

Furst has maintained a 3.99 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Purdue 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.

Furst joins recent Gatorade Indiana Boys Basketball Players of the Year Trey Kaufman (2019-20, Silver Creek High School), Trayce Jackson-Davis (2018-19, Center Grove High School), Romeo Langford (2017-18, New Albany High School), and Brian Bowen (2016-17, La Lumiere School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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

###