

**ST. JOHN'S NORTHWESTERN ACADEMIES STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WISCONSIN 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 Brandin Podziemski of St. John's Northwestern Academies as its 2020-21 Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Podziemski is the first Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. John's Northwestern Academies.

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 Podziemski as Wisconsin'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, Podziemski 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-6, 195-pound senior guard led the Lancers to a 21-7 record and the Division 3 quarterfinals. Podziemski averaged 35.1 points, 10.0 rebounds, 5.6 assists and 4.0 steals per game. Also Wisconsin's Mr. Basketball, he was a three-time First Team All-State honoree and was named the Associated Press State Player of the Year.

Podziemski has served as a peer math tutor at his school and has volunteered locally on behalf of youth basketball programs. "Podziemski has made a name for himself as a sharpshooting wing," said Paul Biancardi, ESPN National Recruiting Director. "He shoots the ball with great confidence, regardless of who's defending him. He's proven he can knock down momentum-changing three-pointers in groups. With his 6-foot-6 frame and his high motor, he can be a high-level collegiate defender and finisher."

Podziemski has maintained a 3.54 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Illinois 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.

Podziemski joins recent Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Basketball Players of the Year Patrick Baldwin (2019-20, Sussex Hamilton High School), Jalen Johnson (2018-19, Nicolet High School), Tyrese Haliburton (2017-18, Oshkosh North High School), and Kobe King (2016-17, La Crosse Central High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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

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