

**GRANDVIEW HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE COLORADO GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 9, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Lauren Betts** of **Grandview High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Colorado Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Betts is the second Gatorade Colorado Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Grandview 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 court, distinguishes Betts as Colorado'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 March, Betts joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Skylar Diggins-Smith (2008-09, Washington High School, Ind.), Nneka Ogumike (2007-08, CyFair 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 state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-7 senior had led the Wolves to a 15-9 record and a berth in the Class 5A state quarterfinals at the time of her selection. Betts averaged 17.1 points, 10.6 rebounds, 3.4 assists and 3.4 blocks per game through 24 games. Ranked as the nation's No. 1 recruit in the Class of 2022 by HoopGurlz and PrepGirlsHoops.com, Betts was the lone high-school player on the USA Basketball Under-19 Team that won the gold medal at the 2021 FIBA U19 World Cup. A three-time First Team All-State selection, she entered the state quarterfinals with prep career totals of 1,475 points, 942 rebounds and 324 blocks.

Betts has volunteered locally with Project C.U.R.E., which prepares medical supplies to be sent to developing countries around the world. She has also donated her time at the Ronald McDonald House-Denver and as a youth basketball coach. "Lauren has always presented problems since she arrived at Grandview at 6-foot-7," said Jerry Knafelc, head coach of Arapahoe High School. "This season, Lauren has really improved her overall game. She has developed a consistent mid-range shot, improved her free throws and, more importantly, she has improved her passing and decision-making."

Betts has maintained a weighted 3.58 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at Stanford 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Two-time winner Betts joins recent Gatorade Colorado Girls Basketball Players of the Year Jana Van Gytenbeek (2019-20, Cherry Creek High School), Francesca Belibi (2018-19, Regis Jesuit High School), and Camilla Emsbo (2017-18, Lakewood High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the court. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Betts has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Betts is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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