

**WOODWARD ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE GEORGIA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (March 9, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Sydney Bowles** of **Woodward Academy** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Georgia Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Bowles is the second Gatorade Georgia Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Woodward 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 court, distinguishes Bowles as Georgia’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, Bowles 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 6-foot senior guard and forward had led the War Eagles to a 27-2 record and a berth in the Class AAAAA state semifinals at the time of her selection. Bowles averaged 21.0 points, 7.0 rebounds, 4.6 assists and 3.0 steals per game through 29 games. The 2021 Class 5A Player of the Year, she is ranked as the nation’s No. 17 recruit by PrepGirlsHoops.com. She entered the state semifinals with 2,402 points and 935 rebounds in her prep basketball career.

A member of the Woodward Academy Honors Council, Bowles has volunteered locally with Open Hands Atlanta to combat nutrition-sensitive chronic disease and as a youth basketball coach. “Sydney has improved tremendously every year,” said Kiesha Brown, head coach of Galloway High School. “She seems to add more to her skill set, which makes guarding her a long night.”

Bowles has maintained a weighted 4.23 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Georgia 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.

Bowles joins recent Gatorade Georgia Girls Basketball Players of the Year Raven Johnson (2020-21, Westlake High School), Sania Feagin (2019-20, Forest Park High School), Kayla McPherson (2018-19, Madison County High School), and Jenna Brown (2017-18, The Lovett 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, Bowles 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. Bowles 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).

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