

**JOHN HERSEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ILLINOIS 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 **Katy Eidle** of **John Hersey High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Illinois Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Eidle is the first Gatorade Illinois Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from John Hersey 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 Eidle as Illinois' 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, Eidle 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 junior guard averaged 19.9 points, 5.3 rebounds, 4.1 assists and 2.9 steals per game this past season, leading the Huskies (27-6) to the Class 4A Grant Regional championship game. A two-time Class 4A First Team All-State selection, Eidle is also the two-time Mid Suburban League East Division Player of the Year. Ranked as the nation's No. 45 recruit in the Class of 2023 by PrepGirlsHoops.com, she concluded her junior year with 1,495 career points.

Eidle has volunteered locally with Hersey High's Big Game, which facilitates special needs students playing basketball. She has also donated her time as a youth basketball coach. "Katy is able to control the game in a number of ways with her ball-handling, passing, rebounding and scoring," said Ryan Kirkorsky, head coach of Rolling Meadows High School. "She definitely makes her teammates better and plays the game the right way. I was impressed with how she let the game come to her, but found ways to dominate when necessary."

Eidle has maintained a weighted 3.48 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Michigan beginning in the fall of 2023.

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.

Eidle joins recent Gatorade Illinois Girls Basketball Players of the Year Greta Kampschroeder (2020-21, Naperville North High School), Angela Dugalic (2019-20, Maine West High School), and Brea Beal (2018-19 & 2017-18, Rock Island 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, Eidle 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. Eidle 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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