

**ST. ANNE'S-BELFIELD SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 **Kymora Johnson** of **St. Anne's-Belfield School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Johnson is the first Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Anne's-Belfield 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 Johnson as Virginia'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, Johnson 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 5-foot-8 junior guard had led the Saints to a 19-1 record and a berth in the Virginia Independent School Athletic Association Division I state tournament semifinals at the time of her selection. Johnson averaged 21.3 points, 7.7 rebounds, 6.7 assists and 4.5 steals per game through 20 games. A two-time VISAA Division I All-State selection, Johnson had connected on 47.4 percent of her 3-point shots. She is ranked as the nation's No. 31 recruit in the Class of 2023 by HoopGurlz.

Johnson has volunteered locally at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Virginia, and she has donated her time as a youth basketball coach. "Mo is extremely talented from a basketball skills standpoint, but her floor IQ is unmatched," said Robyn D'Onofrio, head coach of St. Gertrude High School. "She has great vision, finds open players and is a talented point guard."

Johnson has maintained a 3.53 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Johnson joins recent Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Players of the Year Isabella Perkins (2020-21, Paul VI Catholic High School), Jasha Clinton (2019-20, Princess Anne High School), Ashley Owusu (2018-19, Paul VI Catholic High School), and Samantha Brunelle (2017-18, William Monroe 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, Johnson 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. Johnson 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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