

**CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MISSISSIPPI BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 16, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kimani Hamilton** of **Clinton High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Mississippi Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Hamilton is the second Gatorade Mississippi Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Clinton 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 Hamilton as Mississippi'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 March, Hamilton 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-8, 215-pound senior forward and guard led the Arrows to a 23-5 record and the Class 6A state championship this past season. Hamilton averaged 18.5 points, 9.8 rebounds, 4.0 assists, 2.0 steals and 2.0 blocks per game. A member of the Clarion Ledger Dandy Dozen, he was a First Team All-State and First Team All-Metro selection.

Hamilton has volunteered locally feeding the homeless and has formed his own community service charity to support adolescents: the Kimani Hamilton and Family Foundation. "Hamilton has a long frame and excels in the transition game," said Paul Biancardi of ESPN Basketball. "He's a good 3-point shooter when his feet are set and very good with his pull-up jumper. He has nice upside as a wing defender and he can be very impressive on the ball."

Hamilton has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Mississippi State 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.

Hamilton joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Boys Basketball Players of the Year Daeshun Ruffin (2020-21 & 2019-20, Callaway High School), D.J. Jeffries (2018-19, Olive Branch High School) and Robert Woodard (2017-18, Columbus 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, Hamilton 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. Hamilton 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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