

**BULLIS SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MARYLAND GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 8, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Riley Nelson** of **Bullis School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Maryland Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Nelson is the second Gatorade Maryland Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Bullis 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 Nelson as Maryland's best high school girls basketball player. Nelson joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Kiki Rice (2021-22, Sidwell Friends School, Washington, D.C.), Paige Bueckers (2019-20, Hopkins High School, Minn.), Nneka Ogwumike (2007-08, CyFair High School, Texas), and Candace Parker (2003-04 & 2002-03, Naperville Central High School, Ill.).

The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-1 senior guard and forward averaged 16.6 points and 10.9 rebounds per game this past season, leading the Bulldogs (19-10) to the Independent School League Division AA Tournament semifinals. Nelson also averaged 2.5 assists, 1.4 steals and 1.2 blocks. A McDonald's All-American Game selection, she is ranked as the nation's No. 18 recruit in the Class of 2023 by ESPN.com. Nelson transferred to Bullis from Clarksburg High School, where she led the Coyotes to the 2022 Class 4A state finals.

An American Legion Community Service award winner, Nelson operates her own foundation to help the homeless by raising funds and organizing clothing and food drives for local shelters. In addition, she's volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach and by preparing Thanksgiving meals for the underserved. "Riley is a fierce competitor whose confidence, focus and work ethic are revealed when the spotlight is the brightest," said Justin Leith, head coach of the Bullis School. "In one year, she has had a profound impact on the Bullis basketball program."

Nelson has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Maryland 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 Nelson joins recent Gatorade Maryland Girls Basketball Players of the Year Regina Walton (2020-21, Elizabeth Seton High School), Mir McLean (2019-20, Roland Park Country School), and Jakia Brown-Turner (2018-19, Bishop McNamara High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

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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