

**EDMOND NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE OKLAHOMA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (March 8, 2023) — In its 38<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Laci Steele** of **Edmond North High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Steele is the first Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Edmond North 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 Steele as Oklahoma's best high school girls basketball player. Steele 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 Ogumike (2007-08, CyFair High School, Texas), and Candace Parker (2003-04 & 2002-03, Naperville Central High School, Ill.).

The 5-foot-11 senior guard had led the Huskies to a 25-0 record and a 6A regional final at the time of her selection. The program's all-time leader in steals, Steele averaged 23.2 points, 6.9 rebounds, 2.9 assists, 2.7 steals and 1.2 blocks per game through 25 contests. In the process, she shot 81 percent from the free throw line and 39.4 percent from 3-point range.

A member of the National Honor Society, Steele has volunteered locally gathering gently used backpacks and athletic shoes to donate to underserved areas in addition to collecting winter coats, scarves and gloves. She also has donated her time as a school mentor, meeting with freshmen every week to offer advice and build relationships. "She can do it all: She plays well around the basket, she is one of the best drivers we saw all year and she is a great 3-point shooter—that's a tough combination," said Marcus Klingsick, head coach at Stillwater High School. "She's also a tremendous defensive player, which is an Edmond North hallmark."

Steele has maintained a 4.19 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at North Carolina 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.

Steele joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Basketball Players of the Year Darianna Littlepage-Buggs (2021-22, Classen School of Advanced Studies), Aaliyah Moore (2020-21 & 2019-20, Moore High School), and Gabby Gregory (2018-19, Holland Hall 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](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).