

**JUANITA SANCHEZ EDUCATIONAL COMPLEX STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE RHODE ISLAND 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 **Genesis McNeill** of **Juanita Sanchez Educational Complex** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Rhode Island Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. McNeill is the first Gatorade Rhode Island Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Juanita Sanchez Educational Complex.

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 McNeill as Rhode Island's best high school girls basketball player. McNeill 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 5-foot-11 senior guard had led the Cavaliers to a 20-3 record, a Division 1 state championship and the No. 1 seed in the open state tournament at the time of her selection. McNeill averaged 17.3 points, 10.9 steals, 7.1 rebounds and 8 assists per game through 23 contests. In the process, she recorded a quadruple-double and two triple-doubles.

McNeill has volunteered locally at a Thanksgiving Turkey Drive to support families in need. She's also donated her time to the Davey Lopes Recreation Center, helping children with their homework and assisting staff with youth basketball instruction. "She is incredibly athletic and her steals-per-game average is double compared to [that of] other state leaders," said Risha Pellegrino, head coach at Portsmouth High. "Those steals often lead to points, which has been Juanita's strength all year. She's incredibly well-rounded and composed on the court."

McNeill, who attends Charette Charter School but plays for JSEC, has maintained a 3.65 GPA in the classroom. She remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

McNeill joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Girls Basketball Players of the Year Jillian Rogers (2021-22, North Kingstown High School), Amaya Dowdy (2020-21, St. Raphael Academy), Megan Bodziony (2019-20, St. Andrew's School), and Leiya Stuart (2018-19, St. George's 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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