

**DENVER EAST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE COLORADO BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 15, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **D'Aundre Samuels** of **Denver East High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Colorado Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Samuels is the third Gatorade Colorado Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Denver East 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 Samuels as Colorado’s best high school boys basketball player. Samuels joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Chet Holmgren (2020-21, Minnehaha Academy, Minn.), Trae Young (2016-17, Norman North High School, Ok.), Jayson Tatum (2015-16, Chaminade College Preparatory School, Mo.), and Karl-Anthony Towns (2013-14 & 2012-13, St. Joseph High School, N.J.) and

The 6-foot-3, 1770-pound senior guard led Denver East (26-2) to the state title this past season, marking the 12th championship in program history. Samuels scored 25 points, pulled down eight rebounds and dished seven assists in an 82-61 win over Fossil Ridge in the 6A final. He averaged 21.8 points, 7.5 rebounds, 6.6 assists and 4.9 steals on the year. The Angels are now tied with Manual High for the most state basketball championships in Colorado history.

Samuels has volunteered locally on behalf of two Denver-area youth basketball camps. “We played against Denver East twice and Samuels was exceptional for them both times,” said Northfield High School coach Dre Calloway. “He shows the ability to impact winning on both sides of the ball, night in and night out. If he needs to score, make plays for his teammates, rebound or defend, he gets it done. On the outside looking in, he seems like a great kid.”

Samuels maintains a B average in the classroom. He 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.

Samuels joins recent Gatorade Colorado Boys Basketball Players of the Year Jordan Reed (2021-22, Manual High School), Julian Hammond III (2020-21, Cherry Creek High School), Dominique Clifford (2019-20, The Vanguard School), and Kenny Foster (2018-19, Smoky Hill 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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