

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

**CHICAGO** (March 14, 2024) — In its 39<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kennedy Umeh** of **McDonogh School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Maryland Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Umeh is the second Gatorade Maryland Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from McDonogh School.

The award, which celebrates the nation's top high school athletes for excellence on the court, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Umeh as Maryland's best high school girls basketball player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Candace Parker (2003-04, 2002-03 & 2001-02, Naperville Central High School, Ill.), Paige Bueckers (2017-18, Hopkins High School, Minn.) and Juju Watkins (2022-23 & 2021-22, Sierra Canyon School, Calif.).

The 6-foot-4 senior post player led the Eagles to a 25-4 record and a third straight IAAM Conference A tournament championship this past season. Umeh averaged 19.1 points, 11.0 rebounds, 3.4 steals and 2.0 assists per game, and she recorded 16 points and 13 rebounds in McDonogh's 54-53 win over St. Frances Academy in the IAAM tournament final. A Jordan Brand Classic roster selection, she's ranked as the nation's No. 23 recruit in the Class of 2024 by Prospects Nation. She concluded her prep basketball career with 1,187 points.

A practiced artist, Umeh is a member of the McDonogh Character Initiative, a leadership-development program. She has volunteered locally as a member of her school's academic advisory board. "I have watched Kennedy grow into one of the most explosive and smart bigs across the country," said Vernon Harris, head coach of St. Timothy's School. "Her footwork, approach to the game, physicality, ball-handling and all-around explosiveness are to be admired."

Umeh has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at Stanford 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.

Umeh joins recent Gatorade Maryland Girls Basketball Players of the Year Riley Nelson (2022-23 & 2021-22, Clarksburg High School), Regina Walton (2020-21, Elizabeth Seton High School) and Mir McLean (2019-20, Roland Park Country School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade's commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$4.9 million across more than 1,600 organizations.

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).

###