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**McDONALD'S ALL AMERICAN GAMES ANNOUNCES THE 2018 MORGAN WOOTTEN
PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNERS**

*Two of the nation's top ranked players RJ Barrett and Christyn Williams recognized for
accomplishments on and off the court*

OAK BROOK, Ill., March 13, 2018— Today seniors RJ Barrett and Christyn Williams were named the 2018 Morgan Wootten Players of the Year. McDonald's established the award in 1997 to pay tribute to Wootten's accomplished teaching and coaching career which landed him in the Basketball Hall of Fame in 2000. The two standout high school basketball stars and members of the [McDonald's All American Games](#) 2018 class can now add another honor to their long list of accomplishments.

Barrett of Montverde Academy in Montverde, Florida, and Williams of Central Arkansas Christian School in North Little Rock, Arkansas, earned the award by displaying outstanding character, showing leadership and embodying the values of a student athlete.

"RJ and Christyn join a long list of previous Player of the Year winners that have displayed drive, commitment and dedication to achieve their goals in both academics and athletics," said Wootten. "In a short period of time they have already made a tremendous impact on their communities and teammates, and I'm confident they'll continue making a difference on the game."

A Basketball Buddy with Heart and Smarts

At 6 feet, 7 inches tall, Barrett is ranked by [ESPN](#) as the top small forward in the nation and top overall player. He joins previous Morgan Wootten honorees including Lonzo Ball (2016), Ben Simmons (2015), Jabari Parker (2013), Kevin Love (2007), LeBron James (2003), Jay Williams (1999) and Shane Battier (1997).

Barrett has also earned accolades like the MVP distinction at the Basketball Without Borders Game during the NBA All-Star Weekend in New Orleans in 2017 and helped lead Canada's under-19 squad to a semifinal win over the U.S. at the FIBA Basketball World Cup last year. Barrett signed a letter of intent to play basketball this fall at Duke University.

Barrett has proven his dedication to academics, displaying excellence across his challenging course load. Outside the classroom, he is an active member of the Basketball Buddies program at Montverde Academy, where he acts as a mentor and helps kids find proper basketball technique, officiates their games and encourages them to balance sports with school.

The Dean at Montverde Academy describes Barrett as a genuine student who brings brilliance and heart to everything he does. "I am immediately drawn to his genuine smile, the warmth that he has for others, and his ability to determine and recognize the right course of action," Dean David Bernatavitz remarks in a nomination letter.

Barrett says the honor of receiving the Morgan Wootten Player of the Year award is a testament to the support he's received from his family, coaches and teammates.

"I'm honored to be selected as the 2018 Morgan Wootten Player of the Year. I'm very grateful to those that voted for me to join the group of special athletes that have won this award in the past. I want to thank God, my family, friends, teammates, coaches and the Montverde community that have helped me grow as an athlete, student and person."

A Medal-Winning Leader Who Gives Back

At 5 feet, 11 inches tall, Williams is currently the top guard in the country as ranked by [ESPN](#). She joins previous award recipients that include Katie Lou Samuelson (2015), Breanna Stewart (2012), Elena Delle Donne (2008), Maya Moore (2007) and Candace Parker (2004).

Williams' accomplishments on the court stem far and wide. She is a member of the silver-winning 2017 USA under-19 team and was named Miss Basketball in Arkansas her junior year. Williams will join the powerhouse women's team at the University of Connecticut next year.

Williams works just as hard in the classroom as she does on the court, earning a 3.48 GPA while also giving back to her community. She participates in her school's Mustang Missions, a charitable program providing support and services for underprivileged families, and works at a summer camp serving girls from the third grade and up.

"Christyn provides outstanding leadership and a wonderful example to her teammates, schoolmates and even opposing players," said Steven Quattlebaum, Williams' basketball coach.

Williams describes earning the Morgan Wootten Player of the Year award as a prestigious honor.

"To be chosen as a McDonald's All American is a dream come true. Playing as an all American and also receiving the Morgan Wooten Award is an indescribable feeling. I know any one of the 24 players selected could have received this award and I am truly humbled and grateful to be a recipient."

Next Up for the Two Honorees

Barrett and Williams will receive their Morgan Wootten Player of the Year awards at a ceremony on Tuesday, March 27 in Atlanta. Shortly after, these two athletes will join 46 other high school standouts at the McDonald's All American Games on Wednesday, March 28, at Philips Arena in Atlanta. The Girls game tips off at 5 p.m. EST, followed by the Boys game at 7 p.m. EST.

Tickets for the 2018 McDonald's All American Games are on sale via [Ticketmaster](#) or the Philips Arena box office. Ticket prices start at \$10.

This year's All American Games will benefit [Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities](#), which has served more than 50,000 families since 1979. Proceeds will support the operations of Atlanta's two Ronald McDonald Houses, the Ronald McDonald Family Room and Ronald McDonald Care Mobile.

McDonald's has continued to raise the bar by investing in the future of communities around the globe. In addition to the All American Games, McDonald's provides scholarships, hosts leadership summits and education workshops in the communities it serves and remains committed to continuing to extend service to the world outside of its restaurants. For more information about the McDonald's All American Games, or game week activities in Atlanta, like the POWERADE® Jam Fest, please visit www.mcdaag.com and follow [@McDAAG](#).

Proud sponsors of the 2018 McDonald's All American Games include adidas, American Family Insurance, Coca-Cola®, Mercedes-Benz, POWERADE® and Sprite®.

About Coach Morgan Wootten

During his 43-year career as head basketball coach at DeMatha High School in Hyattsville, Md., Morgan Wootten earned a reputation for being an excellent basketball coach and mentor. In addition to his five national high school championship titles and 33 conference championships, Wootten had the unique distinction of having every DeMatha senior player receive a four-year college scholarship during his final 30 years of coaching. Now retired, Wootten was the first basketball coach at any level to reach 1,200 wins. He is the author of numerous books and is a famed basketball speaker and mentor. Coach Wootten has served as head of the selection committee for the McDonald's All American Games since its inception in 1977.

About McDonald's USA

McDonald's USA, LLC, serves a variety of menu options made with quality ingredients to more than 25 million customers every day. Nearly 90 percent of McDonald's 14,000 U.S. restaurants are independently owned and operated by businessmen and women. Customers can now log online for free at approximately 11,500 participating Wi-Fi enabled McDonald's U.S. restaurants. For more information, visit www.mcdonalds.com, or follow us on Twitter [@McDonalds](#) and Facebook www.facebook.com/mcdonalds.

About Ronald McDonald House Charities®

Ronald McDonald House Charities® (RMHC®), is a non-profit, 501 (c) (3) corporation that creates, finds, and supports programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children and their families. Through its global network of nearly 290 Chapters in more than 64 countries and regions, and its three core programs: the Ronald McDonald House®, the Ronald McDonald Family Room® and the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile, RMHC helps families with sick children stay together, and close to the medical care their child needs at leading hospitals worldwide. RMHC programs not only provide access to quality health care, they enable family-centered care ensuring families are fully supported and actively involved in their children's care. For more information, visit rmhc.org.

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