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**ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEW JERSEY BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 21, 2014) — In its 29th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Karl Towns Jr. of St. Joseph High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Towns Jr. is the second Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Joseph 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 Towns Jr. as New Jersey's best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, Towns Jr. joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.), Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.) and Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas).

The 7-foot-1, 250-pound senior center has led the Falcons to a 28-2 record and a berth in the state Tournament of Champions, scheduled for March 20. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Towns is averaging 21.5 points, 13.7 rebounds and 6.4 blocks through 30 games. A member of the Dominican Republic National Team and a three-time First Team All-State honoree, he has been selected to play in the Jordan Brand Classic and the McDonald's All-American games.

Towns has maintained a weighted GPA of 3.66 in the classroom. A longtime piano pupil, he has served as a member of student council and has volunteered on behalf of multiple charitable organizations, including Parents of Autistic Children, the Mary Kline Classic benefitting cancer research and the Scholarship Fund for Inner-City Children. Towns has also donated his time to the REED Academy for students with autism spectrum disorders, Team Izod Basketball for youth players and the Falcons summer basketball camp. A student assistant in the school guidance department and a sports therapy intern at East Coast Conditioning in Edison as a senior, he also works extensively with St. Joseph's admissions-outreach and student-orientation initiatives.

"Towns is an unbelievable player with a great skill set for his size," said Chris Chiera, head coach at Colonia High. "He's the best I've seen in the state."

Towns has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Kentucky 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 high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Two time winner Towns Jr. joins Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Players of the Year Tyler Ennis (2011-12, St. Benedict's Prep.), Michael Gilchrist (2010-11 & 2008-09, St. Patrick High School), Kyrie Irving (2009-10, St. Patrick), Samardo Samuels (2007-08, St. Benedict's Prep), and Corey Fisher (2006-07, St. Patrick) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit www.gatorade.com/poy.

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