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**MISSION VIEJO HIGH SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® CALIFORNIA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 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 Taylor McQuillin of Mission Viejo High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade California Softball Player of the Year. McQuillin is the first Gatorade California Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Mission Viejo 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 field, distinguishes McQuillin as California's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, McQuillin joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The 5-foot-8 junior left-handed pitcher posted a 25-1 record in the circle with a 0.72 ERA this past season, leading the Diablos (26-1) to the Southern Section, Division II tournament title. A two-time South Coast League MVP, McQuillin struck out 299 batters and walked just 17 in 164.2 innings pitched. She fired four no-hitters, including two perfect games, and held opponents to a .112 batting average. At the plate, the teen, who is blind in her left eye, batted .339 with one home run and a .475 slugging percentage.

McQuillin has maintained a weighted 3.97 GPA in the classroom. A second-degree black belt in taekwondo and a member of the National Honor Society, she writes a weekly blog for StudentSports.com about softball and has donated her time as a youth coach. She has also volunteered with her school's Peer Assistance Leadership Program.

"Taylor McQuillin is so dominant on the mound, I've never seen anything like it," said Brandon Cosenza, head coach of Dana Hills High. "Our team is a great hitting team, but Taylor always had us baffled and made us look foolish."

McQuillin has made a verbal commitment to play softball on an athletic scholarship at the University of Arizona in the fall of 2015.

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.

McQuillin joins recent Gatorade California Softball Players of the Year Rachel Garcia (2012-13, Highland High School), Emily Lockman (2011-12, Norco High School), Cheyenne Cordes (2010-11, Rodriguez High School), Jessica Hall (2009-10, Ayala), Keilani Ricketts (2008-09, Archbishop Mitty), Jessica Spigner (2007-08, Valencia), and Jordan Taylor (2006-07, Valencia) 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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