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**FRIENDSHIP COLLEGIATE ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (November 29, 2012) — In its 28th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Yannick Ngakoue of Friendship Collegiate Academy as its 2012-13 Gatorade District of Columbia Football Player of the Year. Ngakoue is the first Gatorade District of Columbia Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Friendship Collegiate Academy.

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 Ngakoue as District of Columbia's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Ngakoue joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Wes Welker (1999-00, Heritage Hall HS, Okla.), Terrell Suggs (1999-00, Hamilton HS, Ariz.), Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.) and Jerome Bettis (1989-90, Mackenzie HS, Mich.).

The 6-foot-3, 234-pound senior linebacker has led the Knights to a 7-3 record and a berth in the District of Columbia State Athletic Association final against Dunbar, scheduled for Dec. 1. Ngakoue amassed 56 tackles and 18 sacks through 10 games, and scored three defensive touchdowns. He has been selected to play in the 2013 Under Armour All-America Game.

Ngakoue has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a youth mentor and on behalf of community cleanup programs.

"He plays with a great motor and he puts tremendous pressure on the quarterback," said Nunzio Campanile, head coach at Bergen (N.J.) Catholic High. "He plays really, really hard, and he's very disruptive. He's one of the most impressive kids I've seen."

Ngakoue 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 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.

Ngakoue joins recent Gatorade District of Columbia Football Players of the Year Albert Reid (2011-12, Friendship Collegiate Academy), Kevin Hogan (2010-11, Gonzaga College High School), Ricardo Young (2009-10, HD Woodson), Darin Drakeford (2008-09, Roosevelt High School) and Antwon Bailey (2007-08, St. John's College) 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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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