

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

**PORT HURON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MICHIGAN 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 Mark Chapman of Port Huron High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Michigan Football Player of the Year. Chapman is the first Gatorade Michigan Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Port Huron 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 Chapman as Michigan's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Chapman 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-1, 175-pound senior quarterback rushed for 1,537 yards and 25 touchdowns on 181 carries this season, leading the Big Reds (7-3) to the Division 2 state tournament. A Mr. Football finalist as named by State Champs! Sports Network, Chapman also threw for 910 yards and seven touchdowns against only one interception, completing 71-of-133 passing attempts. A 2012 Michigan Preps and Rivals.com First Team All-Combine selection, he recorded 12 tackles as a defensive back.

Also a basketball and track standout, Chapman has maintained a 3.76 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, he has volunteered on behalf of his school's Building Tomorrow's Leaders and Motivators of Change service organizations.

"I have been coaching for 32 years and players like Mark Chapman do not come around that often," said Mike Powell, head coach of rival Cousino High. "He is a great high school football player and a true leader of his team. He singlehandedly beat us and other teams the last two years. He is fast, strong and makes great decisions as a quarterback. I know Mark deserves this honor."

Chapman has verbally committed to play football on an athletic scholarship at Central Michigan University beginning in the fall of 2013.

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.

Chapman joins recent Gatorade Michigan Football Players of the Year Cooper Rush (2011-12, Lansing Catholic High School), Valdez Showers (2010-11, Madison High School), Jason Fracassa (2009-10, Stevenson), Joe Glendening (2008-09, East Grand Rapids High School) and Mike Martin (2007-08, Detroit Catholic Central) 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.

###