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**FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® FLORIDA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 14, 2013) — 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 Ieshia Small of Florida State University School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Florida Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Small is the first Gatorade Florida Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Florida State University 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 Small as Florida's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Small joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot senior guard averaged 23.4 points, 8.3 rebounds, 5.2 steals, 5.0 assists and 1.4 blocks per game this past season, leading the Seminoles (23-7) to the Class 4A state quarterfinals. A McDonald's High School All-American Game selection, Small averaged 33.7 points, 8.3 steals, 7.7 rebounds and 3.7 assists in three Class 4A regional tournament games. Also a 2012 USA Basketball Women's U18 National Team Trials invitee, she averaged 24 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists for Orlando's Dr. Phillips High during the 2011-12 season, leading the Panthers to the Class 8A state championship game as a junior.

Small has maintained a 3.13 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has donated her time locally as a youth basketball instructor.

"Her passion for the game speaks for itself," said Dione Smith, head coach of rival Godby High. "She would do anything to try and will her team to a victory. She is definitely a person who tries to involve all persons on the floor to be involved in the game regardless of their talent level."

Small 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.

Small joins recent Gatorade Florida Girls Basketball Players of the Year Alexis Prince (2011-12, Edgewater High School), Amber Henson (2010-11, Sickles High School), Dawnn Maye (2009-10, Dillard), Ashley Jones (2008-09, Lake Howell), Tiffany Hayes (2007-08, Winter Haven), and Krystal Thomas (2006-07, The First Academy) 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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