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**HILO HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® HAWAII 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 Aliyah Pana of Hilo High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Hawaii Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Pana is the first Gatorade Hawaii Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Hilo 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 Pana as Hawaii'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, Pana 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 5-foot-8 junior guard and forward averaged 12.7 points, 7.9 rebounds, three steals and 1.9 assists per game, leading the Lady Vikings (24-3) to the Division I semifinals. A 2013 First Team All-Tournament selection, Pana led all Division I players by averaging 20 points in the state tournament, including a season-high 24 in a 53-49 win over Iolani.

Pana has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics, as a youth basketball coach and in association with the Huiana Internship Program, a work-based learning experience which allows students to explore specific occupations and career paths.

"Aliyah Pana is a leader both on and off the court," said Hilo High athletic director Sondra Lundvick. "Not only is she an exceptional athlete and role model, she is also highly organized and detail-oriented. She is very humble and accomplishes everything with great initiative and a very positive attitude."

Pana will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Pana joins recent Gatorade Hawaii Girls Basketball Players of the Year Dawnyelle Awa (2011-12, Konawaena High School), Maiki Viela (2010-11 & 2009-10, Lahainaluna High School), Kanisha Bello (2008-09, Waiakea), Jamie Smith (2007-08, Iolani School), and Shawna-Lei Kuehu (2006-07, Punahou) 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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