

Contact: Matt Schiffman (312-729-3672)

**DUTCH FORK HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® SOUTH CAROLINA 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 Alaina Coates of Dutch Fork High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Coates is the first Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Dutch Fork 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 Coates as South Carolina'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, Coates 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-5 senior center led the Silver Foxes to a 29-0 record and a second consecutive Class AAAA state championship this past season. A McDonald's High School All-American Game selection, Coates averaged 21.4 points, 11.6 rebounds, 3.8 blocks, 2.6 steals and 1.4 assists per game. The South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association's Class 4A Player of the Year, she shot 69 percent from the field. Coates recorded 10 points, 16 rebounds, four assists, four blocks and three steals in the 46-43, title-clinching win over Dorman. She participated in the USA Basketball Women's U16 National Team Trials in 2011.

Coates has maintained a 3.04 GPA in the classroom. An active member of the Young Women organization and Distributive Education Clubs of America, she has volunteered locally on behalf of a soup kitchen, a holiday gift-giving campaign and her church's youth group and nursery.

"She was the most dominant player we faced this year," said Aubrey Pompey, head coach of rival Aiken High. "We had the pleasure of facing her three times. Each time, she was the difference in each of our contests. She exhibited good sportsmanship as well as leadership for her team."

Coates has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of South Carolina 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.

Coates joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Players of the Year Asia Dozier (2011-12, Spring Valley High School), Xylina McDaniel (2010-11, Spring Valley High School), Kayla Jenerette (2009-10, Travelers Rest), and Morgan Stroman (2008-09, 2007-08 & 2006-07, Lower Richland), 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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