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**ST. JOSEPH CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® WEST VIRGINIA 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 Mychal Johnson of St. Joseph Central Catholic High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade West Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Johnson is the first Gatorade West Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Joseph Central Catholic 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 Johnson as West Virginia'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, Johnson 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-9 junior guard led the Lady Irish to a 25-1 record and a fifth consecutive Class A state championship this past season. Johnson averaged 21.7 points, 7.9 rebounds, 6.9 assists and five steals per game. A two-time First Team All-State selection, she recorded a triple-double in the state final, collecting 12 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists in a 73-32 win over St. Mary's.

Johnson has maintained a 3.79 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, she has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple community service initiatives in association with her church youth group.

"Mychal Johnson is the best high school player I have seen this year," said Amy Colgrove, head coach at Warren High. "With our schedule, we played against five guards that have signed with Division I programs and I believe she is better than all of them. She is not only a good perimeter shooter, she is also very explosive and can get to the rim."

Johnson has verbally committed to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at the University of Notre Dame beginning in the fall of 2014.

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.

Johnson joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Girls Basketball Players of the Year Makenzie White (2011-12, Scott High School), Mariah Byard (2010-11 & 2009-10, North Marion High School), Whitney Bays (2008-09 & 2007-08, Huntington), and Mackenzie Maier (2006-07, Charleston Catholic) 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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