

**Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)**

**RIDGEFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® CONNECTICUT BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 21, 2013) — In its 28<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Kurt Steidl of Ridgefield High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Connecticut Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Steidl is the first Gatorade Connecticut Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Ridgefield 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 Steidl as Connecticut's best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, Steidl joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.), Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.) and Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas).

The 6-foot-6, 185-pound senior shooting guard averaged 24.9 points, 9.5 rebounds, four assists, and four steals while shooting 82 percent from the free throw line this past season, leading the Tigers (18-6) to the Class LL quarterfinals. A 2013 Connecticut High School Coaches Association All-Star selection, Steidl scored 31 points and pulled down 16 rebounds in a 63-57 win over New Britain in the second round of the state tournament.

Steidl has maintained a 3.68 GPA in the classroom. A devoted parishioner in his church community, he has volunteered locally assisting the elderly and on behalf of the Boys and Girls Club of Ridgefield.

"Kurt Steidl was absolutely one of the best kids we faced this year," said Tom Hunt, head coach at Woodland Regional High. "He averaged a double-double per game while playing in a very tough conference. Every time I saw him, he was terrific."

Steidl has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at the University of Vermont 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.

Steidl joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Boys Basketball Players of the Year Kris Dunn (2011-12, New London High School), Andre Drummond (2010-11, St. Thomas More), Brandon Sherrrod (2009-10, Stratford), Greg DeSantis (2008-09, Notre Dame Catholic High School), Allan Chaney (2007-08, New London High School), and Matthew Bryan-Amaning (2006 - 07, South Kent School) 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

###