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**KALAHEO HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® HAWAII BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 21, 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 Joshua Ko of Kalaheo High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Hawaii Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Ko is the fourth Gatorade Hawaii Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Kalaheo 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 Ko as Hawaii'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, Ko 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-1, 150-pound senior guard led the Mustangs (19-3) to the Division I state championship this past season. Ko averaged 11.9 points, 4.0 assists, 3.2 rebounds and 1.2 steals per game, shooting 58 percent from the field, 49 percent from 3-point range and 70 percent from the free throw line. In a 60-54 title-clinching victory against Maryknoll, Ko totaled 23 points on 9-of-11 shooting and added three assists, capturing state tournament Most Outstanding Player honors for the second consecutive season. He led Kalaheo to the 2012 Division II state championship as a junior.

Ko has maintained a 3.57 GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating his time as a youth basketball instructor, he has volunteered as a fundraiser for his school's athletic program, as part of multiple community clean-up efforts and as a motivational speaker to middle school students.

"His growth from junior to senior year impressed me most," said Nathan Davis, head coach of rival Kalani High. "As a junior, he was more of a spot-up shooter with great range, but as a senior he became a steady ball-handler capable of bringing the ball up against pressure. He was also able to create his own shot off the dribble, which prevented defenses from crowding him or simply chasing him off the 3-point line. Against zones, he also played the role of high-post facilitator, passing and shooting from the elbow. Defensively, he played with more passion and swagger, the way a three-year starter would."

Ko 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.

Ko joins recent Gatorade Hawaii Boys Basketball Players of the Year DeForest Buckner (2011-12, Punahou School), Micah Christenson (2010-11 & 2009-10, Kamehameha Schools-Kapalama High School), Pi'i Minns (2008-09, Kamehameha Schools-Kapalama High School), Kameron Steinhoff (2007-08, Punahou School), and Spencer McLachlin (2006 - 07, Punahou 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.

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