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**MILLARD NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® NEBRASKA 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 Josiah Gustafson of Millard North High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Nebraska Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Gustafson is the first Gatorade Nebraska Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Millard North 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 Gustafson as Nebraska'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, Gustafson 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-5, 195-pound senior wing averaged 21.9 points, 12.3 rebounds, 6.6 assists, 3.9 steals and 1.3 blocks this past season, leading the Mustangs (12-12) to their Class A district championship game. A returning First Team All-Nebraska selection as named by the Omaha World-Herald, Gustafson shot 46 percent from the field, 32 percent from 3-point range and 76 percent from the free throw line. Also a returning Lincoln Journal Star First Team Super State selection, he averaged 19.5 points, 8.4 rebounds and 4.2 assists as a junior, leading Millard North to a 2012 Class A state tournament berth.

Gustafson has maintained a 3.44 GPA in the classroom and represents one of the state's top academic candidates in meeting the Gatorade Award's broad criteria. In addition to donating his time as a youth basketball and soccer instructor, he has volunteered on behalf of the K-Life and Young Life youth ministries.

"He embodies athletic excellence and more importantly sound character," said Doug Woodard, head coach of rival Bellevue West High. "He's a leader on and off the court, devoting countless hours to honing his craft and becoming a better student. He's a good teammate and relentless competitor. His ability to get to the rim and his toughness to finish impresses me most. He creates a ton of contact and is a very good free throw shooter. He's very physical and athletic, and just has a knack for scoring the ball."

Gustafson has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Pittsburgh State University 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.

Gustafson joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Boys Basketball Players of the Year Mike Gesell (2011-12 & 2010-11, South Sioux City High School), Elliott Eliason (2009-10 & 2008-09, Chadron), and Wes Eikmeier (2007-08 & 2006 - 07, Archbishop Bergan Catholic High 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).

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