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**GREATER ATLANTA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE GEORGIA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 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 Rachel Garcia of Greater Atlanta Christian School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Georgia Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Garcia is the first Gatorade Georgia Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Greater Atlanta Christian 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 field, distinguishes Garcia as Georgia's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Garcia joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-8 senior forward scored 53 goals and passed for 19 assists this past season, leading the Spartans (19-2) to the Class AA state championship game. The 2012 Gwinnett County Player of the Year and the 2012 Region 6AA Player of the Year, Garcia is a three-time *Gwinnett Daily Post* All-County selection. She concluded her prep soccer career with 146 goals and 45 assists.

Garcia has maintained a 4.01 GPA in the classroom. A member of the GAC National Art Honor Society, she has volunteered locally at a homeless shelter, as a youth soccer coach and has also completed service missions to both Guatemala and Mexico.

"Rachel Garcia scores when she wants to," said Clark Meyer, head coach of Westminster School. "She is the most ruthlessly effective attacking personality I've seen in high school in 15 years."

Garcia has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at the University of Georgia 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.

Garcia joins recent Gatorade Georgia Girls Soccer Players of the Year Emily Sonnett (2011-12, Fellowship Christian School), Morgan Brian (2010 - 11 & 2009-10, Frederica Academy), Laura Eddy (2008-09 Marist School), Ashley Baker (2007-08, Parkview), and Marah Falle (2006-2007, Parkview) 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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