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**TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ILLINOIS SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 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 Abby Ramirez of Trinity High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Illinois Softball Player of the Year. Ramirez is the first Gatorade Illinois Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Trinity 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 field, distinguishes Ramirez as Illinois' best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Ramirez joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The 5-foot-4 senior shortstop batted .596 with 20 home runs and 48 RBI this past season, leading the Blazers (28-5) to the Class 4A sectional finals. A two-time returning First Team All-State selection as named by the Chicago Tribune, Ramirez scored 60 runs in addition to collecting 20 stolen bases, 12 doubles and five triples. A Preseason MaxPreps Second Team All-American, she produced a .644 on-base percentage and a 1.519 slugging percentage in 2013. Her 20 home runs set a new single-season Class 4A record.

Ramirez has maintained a 4.11 weighted GPA in the classroom and served on the school's executive council. She has also volunteered as an officer in the Youth Ending Hunger Club.

"I think Abby Ramirez is one of the best athletes I have ever coached against," said Colleen Kilduff, head coach of rival Mother McAuley High. "She is an amazing defender and is feared by pitchers when she is at the plate. She is a great competitor and a very respectful young lady. I fully endorse her as this year's Player of the Year, and I can't think of anyone in the last five years more deserving of it."

Ramirez has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Michigan 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.

Ramirez joins recent Gatorade Illinois Softball Players of the Year Lilly Fecho (2011-12, Glenbard North High School), Brianna LeBeau (2010-11, Richards High School), Kirsten Verdun (2009-10, Coal City), Emily Norton (2008-09, Oak Forest), Stephanie Kirkpatrick (2007-08, Plainfield Central), and Suzie Rzegocki (2006 - 07, Lemont) 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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