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**TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MISSOURI 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 Paige Parker of Truman High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Missouri Softball Player of the Year. Parker is the first Gatorade Missouri Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Truman 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 Parker as Missouri's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Parker 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-10 junior left-handed pitcher led the Patriots (31-3) to the Class 4 state championship this past season. The state's Gatorade Softball Player of the Year as a freshman, Parker posted a 26-3 record with a 0.41 ERA in the circle in 2013, striking out 383 batters in 186.2 innings pitched. She also batted .450 with two home runs, 25 RBI and 34 runs scored. Parker was named the Kansas City Star All-Metro Player of the Year and is a three-time First Team All-State honoree.

Parker has maintained a 4.07 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of a literacy-outreach initiative and youth softball programs.

"Parker is the best pitcher we've ever seen," said Jairus Tapp, head coach at Staley High. "She's a very talented player, as well as a fierce competitor and a wonderful teammate. She understands the game, and it's very evident how hard she works."

Parker will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Parker joins recent Gatorade Missouri Softball Players of the Year Emily Crane (2011-12, Troy Buchanan High School), Paige Parker (2010-11, Truman High School), Jessica Damico (2009-10, Pacific), Nicole Hudson (2008-09, Webb City), Courtney Conley (2007-08, Eureka), and Kristin Nottelmann (2006 - 07, Rockwood Summit) 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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