

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Matt Schiffman (312-729-3672)

**WEST FARGO HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NORTH DAKOTA 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 Brittany Rheault of West Fargo High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade North Dakota Softball Player of the Year. Rheault is the third Gatorade North Dakota Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from West Fargo 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 Rheault as North Dakota's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Rheault 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-3 junior right-handed pitcher and outfielder led the Packers (25-2) to their 16th straight Class A state championship this past season. Rheault posted a 14-1 record in the circle with one save, a 0.96 ERA and 152 strikeouts in 95 innings pitched. At the plate, she batted .395 with two home runs, 23 runs scored and 27 RBI. The two-time All-Eastern Dakota Conference selection fired a three-hit shutout with 16 strikeouts in a 1-0 win over Bishop Ryan in the Class A state title game.

Rheault has maintained a 3.54 GPA in the classroom. The editor of the West Fargo High student newspaper, she has volunteered locally with a literacy-outreach program and Big Brothers Big Sisters Fargo in addition to donating her time as a certified LPGA golf instructor.

"On the mound Brittany was probably the best in North Dakota," said Kevin Ziegler, head coach of Bismarck Century High. "We had a radar gun on her at the state tournament and she was clocking consistently above 60 mph. That is excellent for a high school pitcher. She also has complete control of four pitches."

Rheault 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.

Rheault joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Softball Players of the Year Sydney Greenlund (2011-12, West Fargo High School), and Kacie Johnson (2010-11 & 2009-10, West Fargo 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.

###