

Contact: Adam Woullard (312-729-3627)

**NORTH HARDIN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE KENTUCKY GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 19, 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 Kianna Gray of North Hardin High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Kentucky Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Gray is the first Gatorade Kentucky Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from North Hardin 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 track, distinguishes Gray as Kentucky's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Gray joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Allyson Felix (2001-02, Los Angeles Baptist, 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.), Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The 5-foot-8 sophomore won three individual state championships this spring and led the Trojans to the Class 3A state title as a team. Gray won the 100-meter dash in a time of 12.20 seconds, the 200-meter dash in 25.16 and the 100-meter hurdles in 14.83. She also placed third in the 400-meter dash in 56.19. Gray was the 2013 Kentucky Track & Cross Country Coaches Association Ms. Track winner in her first year running track.

Gray has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as an organizer and official at elementary school track meets.

"Kianna had no idea she was such a natural athlete," said John Russell, an assistant coach at North Hardin High. "This is her first year in organized sports yet she broke three individual school records and won state in three events. I have never seen anything like it before."

Gray will begin her junior 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.

Gray joins recent Gatorade Kentucky Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Alisha Adair (2011-12, Western Hills High School), Emma Brink (2010-11, 2009-10 & 2008-09, Sacred Heart Academy), Lutisha Bowen (2007-08, Ballard), and Mary Grace Pellegrini (2006-2007, DuPont Manual) 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.

###