

Contact: Matt Schiffman (312-729-3672)

**ELWOOD COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® INDIANA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 5, 2013) — In its 29th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Sammy Mireles of Elwood Community High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Indiana Football Player of the Year. Mireles is the first Gatorade Indiana Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Elwood Community 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 Mireles as Indiana's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Mireles joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Wes Welker (1999-00, Heritage Hall HS, Okla.), Terrell Suggs (1999-00, Hamilton HS, Ariz.), Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.) and Jerome Bettis (1989-90, Mackenzie HS, Mich.).

The 5-foot-8, 170-pound senior running back rushed for 2,719 yards on 254 carries and 39 touchdowns this past season, leading the Panthers (7-4) to the second round of the Class 2A state playoffs. A 2012 First Team All-State selection, Mireles set an Indiana High School Athletic Association record with 8,110 career rushing yards and became the first player in state history to run for at least 2,000 yards in three different seasons.

Mireles has maintained a 3.36 GPA in the classroom. A devoted parishioner in his church community, he has volunteered locally on behalf of the YMCA and as an elementary school guest speaker.

"Sammy Mireles is an outstanding running back with high character," said Curt Funk, head coach at Mississinewa High. "He does his job to the best of his ability and runs hard every play. After a score he hands the ball to the official and does not brag or boast. He is the high school version of Barry Sanders with his running style."

Mireles remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Mireles joins recent Gatorade Indiana Football Players of the Year Sam Schrader (2012-2013, Mishawaka High School), Gunner Kiel (2011-12, Columbus East High School), Matt McIntosh (2010-11, F.J. Reitz High School), Kofi Hughes (2009-10, Cathedral), Morgan Newton (2008-09, Carmel High School) and Paul McIntosh (2007-08, F.J. Reitz) 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.

###