

Contact: Matt Schiffman (312-729-3672)

**JAMES F. BYRNES HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® SOUTH CAROLINA 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 Shuler Bentley of James F. Byrnes High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade South Carolina Football Player of the Year. Bentley is the third Gatorade South Carolina Football Player of the Year to be chosen from James F. Byrnes 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 Bentley as South Carolina's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Bentley 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 6-foot-1, 190-pound senior quarterback passed for 5,032 yards and 71 touchdowns, completing 293-of-425 passes while throwing just eight interceptions this past season, leading the Rebels (12-2) to the Class 4A-I semifinals. The state's returning Gatorade Football Player of the Year, Bentley broke his own state record for single-season touchdown passes, eclipsing the mark of 59 he set as a junior in 2012. He also set a state record for career touchdown passes with 177, topping the mark of 169 set by 2010-11 Gatorade National Football Player of the Year, Justin Worley.

Bentley has maintained a 3.44 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, he has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple community service initiatives in association with his church youth group and as an elementary school guest speaker.

"Shuler Bentley is as accurate a high school passer I have ever seen play," said Dave Gutshall, head coach at Dorman High. "His statistics are unbelievable. I really think he's the best quarterback in the state."

Bentley has verbally committed to play football on an athletic scholarship at Old Dominion University beginning in the fall of 2014.

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.

Two-time winner Bentley joins Gatorade South Carolina Football Players of the Year Quinshad Davis (2011-12, Gaffney High School), Justin Worley (2010-11, Northwestern High School), Marcus Lattimore (2009-10 & 2008-09, Byrnes) and Daquan Bowers (2007-08, Bamberg-Ehrhardt) 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.

###