

**Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)**

**PAHRUMP VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE NEVADA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 6, 2014) — In its 29<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Sydney Sladek of Pahrump Valley High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Nevada Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Sladek is the first Gatorade Nevada Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Pahrump Valley 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 Sladek as Nevada's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Sladek joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-4 senior forward scored 75 goals and passed for 27 assists this past season, leading the Trojans (18-1-2) to the Division I-A state championship game. The two-time Division I-A State Player of the Year, Sladek scored more than one goal in 16 of 21 games with four four-goal games, two five-goal games, two seven-goal games, an eight-goal game and a nine-goal game. She concluded her prep soccer career with a state-record 207 goals and 68 assists.

Sladek has maintained a 3.93 GPA in the classroom. The secretary of the Pahrump Valley High senior class, she has volunteered locally as part of food drives to benefit the needy and as a youth soccer coach.

"Sydney is a very talented player," said Michael Knutsen, head coach of Cheyenne High. "She was the difference-maker for her team's victories against us. She has speed, ball skills and a great soccer acumen. She is unselfish with the ball and is a great distributor, but she also knows when to take over and be the difference-maker she needs to be."

Sladek has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at the University of Southern California beginning 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.

Sladek joins recent Gatorade Nevada Girls Soccer Players of the Year Nicole Westover (2012-13, Green Valley High School), Haley Wingender (2011-12, Bishop Gorman High School), Lauren Kaskie (2010-11, Palo Verde High School), McKenzie Karas (2009-10, Arbor View), Zakiya Bywaters (2008-09, Rancho), and Jenna Riddle (2007-08 & 2006-07, Centennial) 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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