

Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

**ST. THOMAS MORE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH DAKOTA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 6, 2014) — 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 KJ Medler of St. Thomas More High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade South Dakota Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Medler is the first Gatorade South Dakota Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Thomas More 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 Medler as South Dakota'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, Medler 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-6 junior midfielder scored four goals and passed for 12 assists this past season, leading the Cavaliers (8-6-2) to the state tournament semifinals. Medler was the Soccer605.com Small Program Player of the Year and an Honorable Mention All-State selection. She concluded her junior year with a career total of 13 goals.

Medler has maintained a 3.97 GPA in the classroom. She attends Douglas High, which does not have a soccer team. She has volunteered locally as part of multiple community-service initiatives in association with the National Honor Society.

"I really enjoyed watching KJ Medler with the ball," said Kayla Braffet, head coach of Mitchell High. "She was one of the few girls that stood out to me. She was always very composed and could read the field well."

Medler has made a verbal commitment to attend South Dakota State University beginning in the fall of 2015.

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.

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.

###