

Contact: Jason Belenke (312-729-3631)

**HOPE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE RHODE ISLAND BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 13, 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 Komla Dogbey of Hope High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Dogbey is the first Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Hope 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 Dogbey as Rhode Island's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Dogbey 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 6-foot-2 senior forward scored 21 goals and passed for 12 assists this past season, leading the Blue Wave (6-9-1) to the Division I state tournament. An All-New England selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, Dogbey was a Providence Journal First Team All-State honoree and a member of the Rhode Island Soccer Coaches Association's Mike Dynon Academic All-State Team. He concluded his two-year prep soccer career with 36 goals and 23 assists.

Dogbey has maintained an A average in the classroom. A native of Togo, he has worked as a tutor for refugees in Providence and volunteered locally as part of multiple community-service initiatives in association with his church youth group.

"Komla is a very fast and strong player," said Joao Santos, head coach of Central High. "His physical strength and speed are his best weapons. Although he doesn't possess a lot of technical skill, he was able to score many goals because of his superior speed and size."

Dogbey 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.

Dogbey joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Soccer Players of the Year Dan Apajee (2012-13, La Salle Academy), Colin Patch (2011-12, La Salle Academy), Marcos Ugarte (2010-11, Providence Country Day), Nick Dubee, (2009-10 & 2008-09, Chariho High School), and Brett Uttley (2007-08 & 2006-2007, North Kingstown), 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.