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**MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® CALIFORNIA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 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 Katie Lou Samuelson of Mater Dei High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade California Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Samuelson is the third Gatorade California Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Mater Dei 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 court, distinguishes Samuelson as California's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Samuelson joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.)

The 6-foot-3 junior guard has led the Monarchs to a 26-2 record and a berth in the quarterfinals of the Open Division state tournament, scheduled for March 18. Through 28 games, Samuelson is averaging 26.0 points, 10.1 rebounds and 2.5 assists per game. A member of the USA Basketball Women's U16 National Team, she was a finalist for the Naismith Girls High School Player of the Year award. Samuelson was named the state's Sophomore of the Year and was selected as Division 1 Player of the Year in 2013.

Samuelson has maintained a 4.18 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of the Down Syndrome Association, the Santa Ana YMCA and youth basketball camps.

"Samuelson is a phenomenal basketball player," said Tom Gonsalves, head coach at St. Mary's High. "She can get her shots off against anyone and her range is unlimited. It's scary that she's just a junior."

Samuelson will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Samuelson joins recent Gatorade California Girls Basketball Players of the Year Erica McCall (2012-13, Ridgeview High School), Nirra Fields (2011-12, Mater Dei High School), Kaleena Mosqueda-Lewis (2010-11 & 2008-09, Mater Dei High School), Chelsea Gray (2009-10, St. Mary's), Jasmine Dixon (2007-08, Long Beach Poly), and Jeanette Pohlen (2006-07, Brea Olinda) 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.

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