

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

**HEATHWOOD HALL EPISCOPAL SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® SOUTH CAROLINA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 13, 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 A'ja Wilson of Heathwood Hall Episcopal School as its 2013-14 Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Wilson is the second Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Heathwood Hall Episcopal 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 Wilson as South Carolina'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, Wilson 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-5 senior center led the Highlanders to a 23-4 record and the South Carolina Independent Schools Association Class AAA state championship this past season. The National Player of the Year as named by the Women's Basketball Coaches Association and the Atlanta Tipoff Club's Naismith Girls High School Player of the Year, Wilson averaged 34.4 points, 14.5 rebounds, 5.4 blocks, 3.2 steals and 2.3 assists per game. A McDonald's High School All-American Game selection and also a WBCA All-American, she amassed 37 points, 14 rebounds and eight blocks in the 66-58, title-clinching overtime victory against Northwood Academy.

Wilson has maintained a B average in the classroom as an upperclassman and has served as a member of her school's student government and honor council. In addition to donating her time as a youth basketball and volleyball instructor, she has volunteered locally on behalf of her church and as part of an elementary school after-school care program.

"She has improved her game from year to year," said Roshan Myers, head coach of rival Hammond School. "She is by far the most dominating player my team has faced. Also, her national status has caused young aspiring basketball players to flock to her from all over the state. She responds to them with true sportsmanship, signing autographs, giving hugs and taking pictures. Through it all, she appears to remain humble. What an awesome young lady."

Wilson 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.

Wilson joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Girls Basketball Players of the Year Alaina Coates (2012-13, Dutch Fork High School), Asia Dozier (2011-12, Spring Valley High School), Xylina McDaniel (2010-11, Spring Valley High School), Kayla Jenerette (2009-10, Travelers Rest), and Morgan Stroman (2008-09, 2007-08 & 2006-07, Lower Richland) 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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