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**LAKE HIGHLAND PREPARATORY SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® FLORIDA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 21, 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 Joel Berry of Lake Highland Preparatory School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Berry is the first Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Lake Highland Preparatory 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 Berry as Florida's best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, Berry joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.), Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.) and Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas).

The 6-foot-1, 185-pound senior point guard led the Highlanders to a 29-4 record and their second straight Class 4A state championship this past season. Berry averaged 24.5 points, seven rebounds, 4.3 assists and 2.4 steals per game while shooting 86 percent from the free throw line. The state's two-time returning Gatorade Boys Basketball Player of the Year, he is a 2014 McDonald's All-American Game selection and a 2014 Jordan Brand Classic game invitee. Berry is ranked as the nation's No. 16 recruit in the class of 2014 by ESPN and No. 25 by Rivals. In the 29-year history of the Gatorade award program, Berry becomes the just sixth student-athlete nationwide and Florida's first to three-peat as a State Player of the Year in boys basketball.

Berry has maintained a 3.35 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of the YMCA, in association with his school's peer leadership group and as a youth basketball coach.

"On the court, Joel Berry's ability speaks for itself," said David Davis, head coach at Trinity Prep. "At this level, he is so much stronger and faster than anyone you can put in front of him. Couple that with his competitive nature and he was virtually unstoppable. Off the court, he is one of the most humble high school players I have ever met."

Berry has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at the University of North Carolina 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.

Three time winner Berry joins Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Players of the Year Austin Rivers (2010-11, Winter Park High School), Brandon Knight (2009-10 & 2008-09, Pine Crest School), Ray Shipman (2007-08, Monsignor Pace High School), and Nick Calathes (2006-07, Lake Howell) 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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