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**MOUNT OLIVE HIGH SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEW JERSEY GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 19, 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 Keturah Orji of Mount Olive High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade New Jersey Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Orji is the second Gatorade New Jersey Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Mount Olive 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 track, distinguishes Orji as New Jersey's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Orji joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Allyson Felix (2001-02, Los Angeles Baptist, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The 5-foot-6 senior leapt 43 feet, 0.5 inches in the triple jump and launched herself 20-11.75 in the long jump to win both events at the New Balance Nationals Outdoor championships this month. The Girls' Indoor Track Athlete of the Year as named by The Star-Ledger, Orji also won the triple jump and long jump at the Group III championships as well as the state's Meet of Champions. Her triple jump of 44-1.25 at the Meet of Champions and her long jump effort at New Balance ranked, respectively, as the nation's No. 13 and No. 22 performances in prep history.

Orji has maintained a 3.85 GPA in the classroom. Also an accomplished flutist in her school's wind ensemble and a member of the World Language Honor Society, she has volunteered on behalf of her church's youth group and Vacation Bible School.

"She possesses not only the will to succeed and be the best, but most importantly she possesses the will to prepare to win," said Mount Olive head coach Vanessa Benfatti. "She is dedicated to mastering her craft, and throughout her development as a world-class athlete she does not take her skill and talents for granted. She continually works to improve her performance and is driven to excel in each practice, lifting session, workout, meet or event."

Orji has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at the University of Georgia 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.

Orji joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Olivia Baker (2012-13 Columbia High School), Ajeé Wilson (2011-12 & 2009-10, Neptune High School), Myasia Jacobs (2010 - 11, Paramus Catholic High School), Jillian Smith (2008-09, Southern Regional), Melanie Thompson (2007-08, Voorhees), and Danielle Tauro (2006-2007, Southern Regional) 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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