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**CAPITAL PREP STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® CONNECTICUT GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 12, 2015) — In its 30th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Kiah Gillespie of Capital Prep as its 2014-15 Gatorade Connecticut Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Gillespie is the first Gatorade Connecticut Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Capital Prep.

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 Gillespie as Connecticut'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, Gillespie 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-2 senior forward and guard had led the Trailblazers to a 22-1 record and a berth in the Class L quarterfinals at the time of her selection. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, Gillespie was averaging 31.3 points, 15.7 rebounds, 3.5 assists and 2.3 blocks per contest through 23 games. A three-time First Team All-State selection, she was also chosen to play in both the McDonald's All-American Game and the Jordan Brand Classic. Gillespie has led her team to a No. 16 ranking in the USA TODAY's Super 25 and was named to the USA TODAY's All-USA Connecticut First Team.

Gillespie has maintained a 3.72 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of food-donation drives, community clean-up initiatives and a homeless shelter.

"I can't think of anyone who can even come close to her in ability and versatility on the basketball court," said Ann Folan, head coach at Parish Hill High. "She's fundamentally sound on defense and offensively, she's a powerhouse."

Gillespie has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Maryland 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.

Two-time winner Gillespie joins Gatorade Connecticut Girls Basketball Players of the Year Sarah Veilleux (2012-13, RHAM High School), Kristin Schatzlein (2011-12, Tolland High School), Katie Mahoney (2010-11, Bacon Academy), Kastine Evans (2009-10, Norwich Free Academy), Symone Roberts (2008-09, New Britain), and Heather Buck (2007-08 & 2006-07, Stonington) 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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