

**Contact: Matt Schiffman (312-729-3672)**

**GROSSE POINTE SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® MICHIGAN GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 12, 2015) — In its 30<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 Cierra Rice of Grosse Pointe South High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Michigan Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Rice is the first Gatorade Michigan Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Grosse Pointe South 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 Rice as Michigan'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, Rice 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 5-foot-9 senior guard had led the Blue Devils to a 17-4 record and a berth in the Class A regional tournament at the time of her selection. Rice averaged 21 points and 10 rebounds while shooting 54 percent from inside the arc through 21 games. A 2015 Michigan Miss Basketball finalist, she eclipsed the 1,000-point mark for her prep career this season.

Rice has maintained a 3.41 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and her school's Conservation Club, she has volunteered locally as a mentor for children with special needs and as a youth basketball coach.

"Cierra Rice is a player that can dominate a game on both ends of the floor," said Matt Joseph, head coach at Utica Ford High. "She can score inside and out and never takes any plays off. She respects the game and shows sportsmanship whether on the winning or the losing end of a game."

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

Rice joins recent Gatorade Michigan Girls Basketball Players of the Year Lexi Gussert (2013-14, Forest Park High School), Tori Jankoska (2012-13, Freeland High School), Madison Ristovski (2011-12, University Liggett School), Jasmine Hines (2010-11, Central Lake High School), Madison Williams (2009-10, Detroit Country Day School), Destiny Williams (2008-09, Benton Harbor), Kellie Watson (2007-08, Ionia), and Keshia Hines (2006-07, Avondale) 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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