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**INCARNATE WORD ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® MISSOURI 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 Napheesa Collier of Incarnate Word Academy as its 2014-15 Gatorade Missouri Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Collier is the fourth Gatorade Missouri Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Incarnate Word Academy.

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 Collier as Missouri'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, Collier 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 2012-13 Gatorade State Player of the Year, the 6-foot-1 senior forward had led the Red Knights to a 25-2 record and a berth in the Class 4 state tournament. At the time of her selection, Collier was averaging 26.2 points, 12.4 rebounds, 4.1 blocks, 4.1 steals and 2.6 assists per game. A McDonald's All-American Game selection and one of five finalists for the Naismith Girls High School Player of the Year Award, she entered the state tournament with 2,691 points and 1,276 rebounds in her prep basketball career.

Collier has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has volunteered locally with Habitat for Humanity, the Salvation Army and at Marygrove, a youth treatment facility.

"Napheesa Collier is the complete package—size, strength, quickness and smarts," said Scott Small, head coach at the Mary Institute and St. Louis Country Day School. "She has been working on her range and is now one of the best 3-point shooters in the area, too. She is impossible to guard in many ways and I would not want to take the ball at her."

Collier has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Connecticut 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 Collier joins recent Gatorade Missouri Girls Basketball Players of the Year Sophie Cunningham (2013-14, Rock Bridge High School), Maddie Stock (2011-12, St. Joseph's Academy), Shelby Winkelmann (2010-11, Hermann High School), Jazmin Hitchens (2009-10, Incarnate Word Academy), Katherine Harry (2008-09, Rock Bridge), Kathleen Scheer (2007-08, New Haven), and Tyra White (2006-07, Hickman Mills) 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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