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**PIUS X HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEBRASKA 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 Maddie Simon of Pius X High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Nebraska Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Simon is the first Gatorade Nebraska Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Pius X 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 Simon as Nebraska'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, Simon 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 guard led the Thunderbolts to a 22-2 record and the Class B state championship this past season. In the 41-33, title-clinching victory against Norris, Simon collected 18 points, five rebounds and two assists. A returning Lincoln Journal Star First Team Super-State and Omaha World-Herald All-Nebraska selection, she averaged 18.1 points, 7.2 rebounds and 2.7 assists per game in her final prep campaign. She concluded her prep career as the owner of her school's scoring record with 1,378 points.

Also a golf and track standout, Simon has maintained a 3.63 GPA in the classroom. In addition to volunteering locally as a youth basketball instructor, she has donated her time as part of her school's student ambassador program and as a member of her church's youth group.

"Maddie exemplifies what it means to be a true student-athlete," said Ryan Reeder, head coach of rival Waverly High. "She works very hard on and off the court, and it shows. From her tremendous ball-handling skills to her ability to get to the rim, rebound, shut down the opponent's best player or make the extra pass to a teammate, she has really improved her game every year she has been in high school."

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

Simon joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Girls Basketball Players of the Year Jessica Shepard (2013-14 & 2012-13, Fremont High School), Brianna Craig (2011-12, Lincoln Northeast High School), Alexis Akin-Otiko (2010-11, Bellevue West High School), Jordan Hooper (2009-10 & 2007-08, Alliance), K.K. Houser (2008-09, Lincoln Southeast), and Dominique Kelley (2006-07, Lincoln Northeast) 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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