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**SOUTH SALEM HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® OREGON 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 Katie McWilliams of South Salem High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Oregon Girls Basketball Player of the Year. McWilliams is the first Gatorade Oregon Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from South Salem 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 McWilliams as Oregon'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, McWilliams 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 point guard and forward has led the Saxons to a 24-2 record and a berth in the Class 6A state quarterfinals against Jesuit High, scheduled for March 12. At the time of her selection, McWilliams was averaging 15.5 points, 5.8 rebounds, 3.4 assists, 1.2 blocks and 1.1 steals per game. A 2014 Class 6A First Team All-State honoree, she is a two-time Greater Valley Conference Player of the Year and is the No. 40-rated recruit in the Class of 2015 by espnW.

McWilliams has maintained a 3.89 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as part of a fundraising campaign to benefit the American Heart Association and as a youth basketball coach.

"The most impressive part of Katie's game is her ability to get her teammates involved," said Derick Handley, head coach of McNary High. "She has the rare ability to make others around her significantly better without sacrificing her own game."

McWilliams has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Oregon State University 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.

McWilliams joins recent Gatorade Oregon Girls Basketball Players of the Year Jaime Nared (2013-14, Westview High School), Mercedes Russell (2012-13 & 2011-12, Springfield High School), Jen Reese (2010-11 & 2009-10, Clackamas High School), Kate Lanz (2008-09 & 2007-08, Central Catholic), and Michelle Jenkins (2006-07, Southridge) 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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