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**WESTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE NEBRASKA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 19, 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 Michelle Xiao of Westside High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Nebraska Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Xiao is the first Gatorade Nebraska Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Westside 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 field, distinguishes Xiao as Nebraska's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Xiao joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-4 senior midfielder and forward scored 26 goals and passed for 11 assists this past season, leading the Warriors (13-5) to the Class A state quarterfinals. A member of the U.S. Soccer Under-20 Women's National Team, Xiao is a two-time Omaha World Herald First Team All-State selection and a two-time Lincoln Journal Star Super State honoree. She concluded her prep soccer career with 64 goals and 30 assists.

Xiao has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Mu Alpha Theta math honor society, she has volunteered locally with Secondhand Support collecting soccer equipment to donate to organizations around the world. She has also donated her time as a youth soccer coach.

"Michelle is a fantastic player who gives her all on and off the field," said Chuck Morgan, head coach of Lincoln East High. "She has so much knowledge of the game and can think through problems instantly. She is a coach on the field and has instincts very few possess."

Xiao has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at Stanford University beginning 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.

Xiao joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Girls Soccer Players of the Year Maddie Elliston (2013-14 & 2012-13, Marian High School), Jackie Tondl (2011-12, Marian High School), Mayme Conroy (2010-11, Skutt Catholic High School), Katie Pickinpugh (2009-10, Millard West High School), Allie Adam (2008-09, Millard West High School), and Molly Thomas (2007-08 & 2006-07, Millard North High School) 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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