

Contact: Jason Belenke (312-729-3631)

**BLACKMAN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® TENNESSEE GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 10, 2016) — In its 31st year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Crystal Dangerfield of Blackman High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Tennessee Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Dangerfield is the first Gatorade Tennessee Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Blackman 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 Dangerfield as Tennessee'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, Dangerfield 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 state's two-time returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, Dangerfield averaged 23.9 points, 5.2 rebounds, 2.9 assists and 2.5 steals per game this past season, leading the Blaze (27-4) to the Class AAA regional semifinals. The 5-foot-6 senior point guard shot 46.4 percent from the field, 35.4 percent from 3-point range and 81.7 percent from the free-throw line. The 2016 McDonald's All-American led Blackman to back-to-back Class AAA state titles in 2014 and 2015. She also won gold medals with USA Basketball at the 2015 FIBA U19 World Championship and 2013 FIBA Americas U16 Championship.

Dangerfield has maintained a 3.80 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and her school's DECA club, she has volunteered locally on behalf of her church, as part of a literacy-outreach program and as a youth basketball instructor. She has also donated her time to fundraising efforts benefiting Alzheimer's research and by promoting healthy living at nearby elementary schools.

"The past four years Crystal Dangerfield has raised the level of play in our league and across the state," said Alan Bush, head coach at rival Siegel High. "She seems to always play with a high level of composure and confidence. Dangerfield's talent, along with her calm demeanor and humility, is transcendent and will always be remembered within our community."

Dangerfield 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.

Three-time winner Dangerfield joins Gatorade Tennessee Girls Basketball Players of the Year Nina Davis (2012-13, Central High School), Bashaara Graves (2011-12, Clarksville High School), Shacobia Barbee (2010-11, Riverdale High School), Taylor Hall (2009-10, Morristown-Hamblen West), Faith Dupree (2008-09, Webb School of Knoxville) and Glory Johnson (2007-08 & 2006-07, Webb School of Knoxville) 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.

###