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**STEVENSON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ILLINOIS BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 20, 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 Jalen Brunson of Stevenson High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Illinois Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Brunson is the first Gatorade Illinois Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Stevenson 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 Brunson as Illinois's best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, Brunson joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.), Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.) and Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas).

The 6-foot-2, 190-pound senior guard has led the Patriots to a 28-3 record and a berth in the Class 4A state semifinals, scheduled for March 20. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Brunson averaged 23.1 points, 5.4 assists, 4.7 rebounds and 2.6 steals through 31 games. Also the 2014-15 State Player of the Year as named by the Chicago Sun-Times, Brunson shot 48.7 percent from the field, 38.3 percent from 3-point range and 82.0 percent from the free-throw line entering the round of four. His 56 points as a junior in the 2014 Class 4A state semifinals set a single-game state tournament record. In addition to participating in Nike's LeBron James Skills Academy and Elite Youth Basketball League this past summer, he helped capture the 2014 FIBA Americas U18 Championship as a member of the USA Basketball Men's U18 National Team.

Brunson has maintained a 3.22 weighted GPA. In addition to donating his time as a voting registrar, he has volunteered locally on behalf of his church and as a youth basketball instructor.

"He is a matchup nightmare," said Billy Pitcher, head coach of rival Lake Zurich High. "If you crowd him, he goes by you. If you give him space, he hits a 3-pointer. If you double him, he fires a no-look pass to the open teammate. And he never turns the ball over. His decision-making is excellent."

Brunson has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Villanova 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.

Two-time winner Brunson joins Gatorade Illinois Boys Basketball Players of the Year Jabari Parker (2012-13 & 2011-12, Simeon Career Academy), Chasson Randle (2010-11, Rock Island High School), Rayvonte Rice (2009-10, Centennial High School), Matt Vogrich (2008-09, Lake Forest High School), Michael Dunigan (2007-08, Farragut Career Academy), and Derrick Rose (2006-07, Simeon Career Academy) 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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