



## **Saint Viator Girls' Basketball Team Named Chicago Sky High School Team of the Week**

January 3, 2011



As part of their team building ritual, the girls huddle up to build excitement before the game.

the Saint Viator girls' basketball team the Chicago Sky High School Team of the Week starting on Jan. 5.

"Your efforts on and off the court have not gone unnoticed," said team spokeswoman Stephanie Zanatta. "We appreciate your dedication to the game and to your community."

As a result of winning the week's title, the Lady Lions won a "Team Night Out" package to a summer 2011 Sky regular season home game at Allstate Arena when they will be honored on court during the game.

A variety of Sky officials also will appear at one of the Lions' upcoming games, including possibly some of their coaches and athletes, as well as their mascot, Sky Guy, who will be giving away free collectibles to the crowd and raffle prizes.

It was Taylor Skala, the team's leading scorer and point guard, who spearheaded the service project at Addolorata Villa. Her 90-year-old great aunt lives at the Wheeling facility, and she has visited it many times, including attending their parties and activities.

"I felt our team might bring some youth and vitality to the residents," says Skala, a Rockhurst University recruit. "Our team is really social, so I knew they would have no problem mingling with residents and making the switch from playing basketball to serving seniors."

The girls' basketball team was the latest from Saint Viator to participate in the athletic department's theme this year: Victory in service.

"Volunteering like this makes for great team building, but it also furthers their Viatorian education," says Tim Carlson, athletic director. "Incorporating Christian service is part of the Viatorian identity and the hallmark of a Saint Viator education."

The Saint Viator girls' basketball team won their third straight Snowflake Classic tournament last week, but they had a secret weapon. The day before the tournament opened, the entire varsity team helped provide a holiday party for the senior community at Addolorata Villa in Wheeling.

Their volunteer efforts warmed the hearts of the residents and the varsity players, giving them greater sense of teamwork from serving others.

"It was a win-win for both my team and the residents," says Head Coach Paul Bjerckness, a math teacher at Saint Viator.

Officials with the Chicago Sky, the WNBA franchise based in Rosemont, agreed. They named