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**THE PROUT SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® RHODE ISLAND VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 14, 2010) — In its third decade of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Elise Walsh of The Prout School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Rhode Island Volleyball Player of the Year. Walsh is the third Gatorade Rhode Island Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from The Prout 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 Walsh as Rhode Island's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award announced in December, Walsh joins an elite alumni association of past state volleyball award winners, including USA Volleyball Olympians Kim Glass (2001-02, Horseshoe HS, Penn.), Kim Willoughby (1998-99, 1999-00, Assumption HS, La.) and Ogonna Nnamani (1999-00, University HS, Ill).

The state's returning Gatorade Volleyball Player of the Year, the 5-foot-7 senior setter led the Crusaders to a 14-3 record and their second straight Division I state championship this past season. Walsh recorded 517 assists, 150 digs, 82 service aces and 48 kills while posting a kill percentage of .390. The unanimous selection as Division I state player of the year by the Rhode Island Volleyball Coaches Association, Walsh is a three-time First Team All-State selection who helped Prout to four consecutive state titles, two each in Division II and Division I. She finished her prep career with 2,204 assists and 221 service aces.

Walsh has maintained a B average in the classroom. A member of the school yearbook staff, she has volunteered locally as part of a fundraising campaign to benefit leukemia research and at the North Kingstown Free Library.

"Elise Walsh's mental skills are just as impressive, and maybe even more impressive, than her physical skills," said Victoria Tefft, head coach of rival North Kingstown High. "Her technique is just incredible for a player her age. Her attention to detail in her setting and her touch, it's wonderful. It's just magical to watch her."

Walsh remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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 ESPN RISE and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, 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 Walsh joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Volleyball Players of the Year Katie Walsh (2008-09, The Prout School) and Sam Andreozzi (2007-08, North Kingstown) 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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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