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Contact: Julie Mason (412-561-1014)

**SHANLEY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NORTH DAKOTA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 2, 2010) — In its third decade of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Connor McGovern of Shanley High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year. McGovern is the first Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Shanley 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 McGovern as North Dakota's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, McGovern joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Wes Welker (1999-00, Heritage Hall HS, Okla.), Terrell Suggs (1999-00, Hamilton HS, Ariz.), Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.) and Jerome Bettis (1989-90, Mackenzie HS, Mich.).

The 6-foot-4, 282-pound senior guard and defensive tackle led the Deacons to a 12-0 record and their second consecutive Class AA state championship this past season. A three-time All-State selection, McGovern recorded 80 tackles and three sacks on defense, while blocking for an offense that scored 45.3 points per game.

McGovern has maintained a 3.48 GPA in the classroom. A religious education instructor for grade school students, he has also volunteered assisting the elderly at local nursing homes.

"On defense, McGovern demands a double-team on every single play," said Cody Kittelson, head coach of rival Kindred High. "On offense, his size and speed allow him to cause mismatches throughout the game."

McGovern has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at the University of Missouri beginning in the fall of 2011.

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.

McGovern joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Football Players of the Year Esley Thorton (2009-10, Bismarck), Brent Qvale (2008-09, Williston) and Josh Horner (2007-08, Fargo South) 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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