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**REGIS JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® COLORADO BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 18, 2010) — In its 25<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Bud Thomas of Regis Jesuit High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Colorado Boys Basketball Player of the Year.

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 Thomas as Colorado'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, Thomas joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Chris Paul (2002-03, West Forsyth HS, N.C.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), 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 state's returning Gatorade Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Thomas led the Raiders (27-1) to a second consecutive Class 5A state tournament title this past season, averaging 19.9 points, 8.4 rebounds, 3.5 assists, 2.3 blocks and 1.9 steals per game. Colorado's 2008-09 Mr. Basketball selection as named by *The Denver Post*, the 6-foot-6, 200-pound senior forward scored eight points in a 68-58 overtime victory against Fairview in this year's Class 5A state championship game. Also the Most Valuable Player of last year's Class 5A state title game, he averaged 17.5 points, 6.6 rebounds, 2.1 assists, 1.6 steals and 1.5 blocks per game as a junior.

Thomas has maintained a 3.87 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered serving meals at a local soup kitchen, collecting holiday gifts for underprivileged children and instructing area youth athletes at a summer basketball clinic.

"He's certainly a multi-dimensional player," said Monty Alcaraz, head coach of rival Fort Collins High. "You can't just focus on one area on the floor. You have to defend him everywhere. He's also a great rebounder. He's capable of getting eight to 12 points just by being active on the boards. He plays on a well balanced team, but he's certainly the guy that keeps them going night in and night out. He's had a wonderful past few years of high school."

Thomas 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.

Thomas joins recent Gatorade Colorado Boys Basketball Players of the Year Reggie Jackson (2007-08, Palmer) and Levi Knutson (2006-07, Arapahoe) among the state's list of former award winners.

To celebrate the award's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Gatorade wants you to vote for the All-Time Greatest Players of the Year at [gatorade.com/POY25](http://gatorade.com/POY25). 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

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