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Contact: Julie Mason (412-561-1014)

**MONTROSE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MARYLAND BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 18, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Josh Hairston of Montrose Christian School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Maryland Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Hairston is the third Gatorade Maryland Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Montrose Christian 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 Hairston as Maryland'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, Hairston 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 6-foot-8, 220-pound senior power forward led the Mustangs to a 16-5 record this past season, averaging 20.6 points, 10.7 rebounds and 2.2 blocks per game. Currently ranked No. 18 nationally by ESPNU in the Class of 2010 and as the No. 10 power forward in the country by Scout.com, Hairston earned MVP honors at the Sleepy Thompson tournament earlier this month, recording 15 points and nine rebounds in the tournament final to help beat Episcopal High, 47-38.

Hairston has maintained a 3.26 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach and as a mentor for underprivileged children.

"Josh Hairston is without a doubt one of the greatest high school players I've ever coached and there have been some really good ones," said Montrose Christian Head Coach Stu Vetter. "There's a reason why he's going to Duke. He does everything right on the basketball court."

Hairston has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Duke 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 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.

Hairston joins recent Gatorade Maryland Boys Basketball Players of the Year Christian Webster (2008-09, Landon School), Sean Mosley (2007-08, St. Frances Academy), and Malcolm Delaney (2006-07, Towson Catholic) among the state's list of former award winners.

To celebrate the award's 25th anniversary, Gatorade wants you to vote for the All-Time Greatest Players of the Year at 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.

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