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**FOREST HILL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MISSISSIPPI 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 Andre Stringer of Forest Hill High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Mississippi 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 Stringer as Mississippi'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, Stringer 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, Stringer led the Rebels (16-13) to the Class 5A semifinals this past season, averaging 26.4 points, 7.0 assists, 4.0 rebounds and 3.0 steals per game. The 5-foot-10 senior guard was Mississippi's Mr. Basketball in 2009 and is a member of the 2009-10 Clarion-Ledger Dandy Dozen.

Stringer has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

"Andre Stringer does everything for that team," said Wayne Brent, head coach of rival Callaway High. "He can really, really shoot the basketball, with great range. As soon as he's over halfcourt, he's a threat."

Stringer has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Louisiana State 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.

Stringer joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Boys Basketball Players of the Year Scottie Haralson (2007-08, Provine) and Ravern Johnson (2006-07, Coahoma County) 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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