

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Julie Mason (412-561-1014)

**LA SALLE ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® RHODE ISLAND BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 22, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Kadeem Kushimo of La Salle Academy as its 2009-10 Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Kushimo is the second Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from La Salle Academy.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the track, distinguishes Kushimo as Rhode Island's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Kushimo joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ryan Hall (1999-01, Big Bear HS, Calif.), Meb Keflezighi (1993-94, San Diego HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.) and Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.).

The 6-foot-1, 201-pound senior set a state record at this spring's All-State Meet, winning the 100-meter dash in 10.59 seconds to eclipse the old record by 0.03 seconds. Kushimo also won the 200-meter dash in 21.47 seconds, setting a meet record by 0.02 seconds, and ran the anchor leg on La Salle's winning 4x100-meter relay quartet. In his first year of running outdoor track, Kushimo won the 100 meters, 200 meters, long jump and 4x100 relay at the Class A meet, leading the Rams to second place as a team.

Kushimo has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with La Salle Academy.

"Kadeem Kushimo, he's just fast," said Erica Horlbogen, head coach of rival Coventry High. "He gave a very impressive performance this spring. He dominated every race he was in. He's got a lot of talent."

Kushimo 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.

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.

###