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**MIDWEST CITY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® OKLAHOMA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 11, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Richa Jackson of Midwest City High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Jackson is the first Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Midwest City 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 court, distinguishes Jackson as Oklahoma's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Jackson joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.)

The 6-foot-1 senior guard and forward has led the Lady Bombers (24-1) to the Class 6A state tournament, scheduled to begin on March 11. Entering the postseason, Jackson owned averages of 18.6 points, 4.2 rebounds and 3.2 assists per game. A three-time First Team All-State honoree, Jackson has been selected to play in both the McDonald's High School All-American Game and the Women's Basketball Coaches Association All-America Game this spring. Jackson is a four-year varsity starter who, at the time of her selection, had led Midwest City to a 71-5 record in her prep career.

Jackson has maintained a 3.69 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, she has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach.

"Jackson is one of those big, powerful, athletic players that you just don't see come along too often in Oklahoma," said Rick Wilson, head coach of rival Weatherford High. "She can literally play every single position on the floor. She's definitely the best of the best."

Jackson 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.

Jackson joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Basketball Players of the Year Kevi Luper (2008-09, Adair), Alyssia Brewer (2007-08, Sapulpa), and Angel Goodrich (2006-07, Sequoyah) 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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