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SAINT ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE CALIFORNIA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 24, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced **Ashton Purvis of Saint Elizabeth High School** as its **2009-10 Gatorade California Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year**. Purvis is the first Gatorade California Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Saint Elizabeth 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 track, distinguishes Purvis as California's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Purvis joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Allyson Felix (2001-02, Los Angeles Baptist, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Iowa) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The 5-foot-8 senior sprinter won the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.17 seconds and the 200-meter dash in 22.90 at the California Interscholastic Federation state championship meet this spring, leading the Mustangs to a fifth-place finish as a team. Her 200-meter time ranked as the nation's No. 1 clocking among prep competitors in 2010 entering this week's USA Track & Field Junior Outdoor Championships, while her 100-meter time ranked No. 2. Purvis' season-best 100 ranks sixth in prep history and only eight prep girls have ever run a faster 200. The 2010 Female Athlete of the Year as named by the Bay Area News Group-East Bay, Purvis won the 200-meter dash and the 60-meter dash at the National Scholastic Indoor Championships in March. A member of Team USA at the International Association of Athletics Federation World Youth Championships in each of the past three summers, she was the fastest American in earning bronze in both the 100 and 200 last summer. She captured first place in the 100-meter dash at the 2008 CIF state meet as a sophomore and first place in the 200-meter dash as a junior at the 2009 CIF state meet.

Purvis has maintained a B average in the classroom. A member of her school's Black Student Union as well as the Drama Club, she has donated more than 100 hours of community service throughout her prep career, volunteering as a K-8 tutor, on behalf of the Rainbow Recreation Center enrichment programs and in association with Project Transition Oakland, a community support organization. A participant in the East Oakland Youth Development Center's Youth Leadership Program and the invite-only Tavis Smiley Foundation's Youth Leadership Institute, Purvis has also donated her time as a peer tutor and youth athletic instructor. She has also mentored youth athletes with the 100 Black Men of the Bay Area track & field training program as well as the Pacific Association and the 3M Track Club.

"She's been an outstanding inspiration," said Saint Elizabeth head coach Mike Frankfurt. "She's been a real leader on the team. All the kids have looked up to her. Her records speak for themselves. She's always at practice. She's very precise and detailed about her workouts. She's just a very unique kid, and she has a heart of gold. I could go on and on about her. She's all that stuff and more."

Purvis has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Miami 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.

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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