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**ALBUQUERQUE ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEW MEXICO 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 Julia Foster of Albuquerque Academy as its 2009-10 Gatorade New Mexico Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Foster is the first Gatorade New Mexico Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Albuquerque 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 Foster as New Mexico'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, Foster 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 junior distance runner won the 1600-meter and 3200-meter run at the Class 4A state meet this spring, leading the Chargers to second place as a team. Also the 2009-10 Gatorade New Mexico Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Foster set a new Class 4A record in the 3200 at the state meet, breaking the tape in 11:01.10 to better by eight seconds the previous mark set in 2001 by former Taos High standout Alicia Torres. Foster swept the 1600 and 3200 at the state meet as a junior as well.

Foster has maintained a 90.0 average in the classroom. She has volunteered as a summer camp counselor, a youth mentor for disadvantaged children and at an area food bank.

"Julia Foster's work ethic is second to none," said Albuquerque Academy head coach Sheryl Clemmer. "She doesn't cut any corners and she isn't afraid to go that extra mile. She is a phenomenal competitor and one of the finest athletes I have ever encountered."

Foster will begin her senior year of high school 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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