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Contact: Julie Mason (412-561-1014)

**OZEN MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE TEXAS 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 A'Lexus Brannon of Ozen Magnet High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Texas Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Brannon is the first Gatorade Texas Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Ozen Magnet 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 Brannon as Texas'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, Brannon 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-9 senior recorded the nation's top long jump and the triple jump in winning both events at the Class 4A state meet this spring. Brannon leapt 20 feet, 3 inches in the long jump and soared 42 feet, 0.75 inches to capture the triple jump. At this month's New Balance Outdoor Nationals, she bettered her mark in the triple jump, clearing 42-3.5 to win gold, though the effort was wind-aided. She also took third in the triple jump and sixth in the long jump at the 2009 Nike Outdoor Nationals.

Brannon has maintained an unweighted 3.43 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally mentoring fourth-grade students, coaching youth volleyball and feeding the homeless.

"A'Lexus is a very hard worker and she's very dedicated," said Ozen High head coach Sandra Jones. "She knows what she wants and she's determined to get it."

Brannon has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Texas 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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