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**CHARTER SCHOOL OF WILMINGTON STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® DELAWARE BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 23, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Nick Dirienzo of Charter School of Wilmington as its 2010-11 Gatorade Delaware Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Dirienzo is the second Gatorade Delaware Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Charter School of Wilmington.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Dirienzo as Delaware's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Dirienzo joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Tony Meola (1986-87, Kearney HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot, 155-pound senior midfielder recorded 13 goals and four assists this past season, leading the Force (16-1-1) to the state semifinals. An All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, Dirienzo was the 2010 Delaware High School Soccer Coaches Association Player of the Year and a two-time First Team All-State selection. Dirienzo concluded his prep soccer career with 27 goals and 13 assists.

Dirienzo has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a youth soccer and basketball instructor and with the Special Olympics.

"Nick Dirienzo had a dominant year this year in high school ball," said Miles Dean, Dirienzo's club coach with the Delaware Blizzard. "He's got really good size and he's really good technically on the ball. He's very skillful. This year he took it to the next level. He learned how to use all of his skills in a way in which he could dominate."

Dirienzo 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.

Dirienzo joins recent Gatorade Delaware Boys Soccer Players of the Year two-time winner Andrew O'Malley (2009-10 & 2008-09, Salesianum School) and Matt Margiotta (2007-08, Salesianum School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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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