

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)**

**WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® INDIANA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 23, 2011) — In its 26<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Eriq Zavaleta of Westfield High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Indiana Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Zavaleta is the first Gatorade Indiana Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Westfield 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 field, distinguishes Zavaleta as Indiana'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, Zavaleta 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-1, 180-pound senior forward and midfielder recorded 20 goals and 10 assists this past season, leading the Shamrocks (16-2) to the Fishers Sectional championship game. A 2010 ESPN RISE First Team All-American and a two-time National Soccer Coaches Association of America Youth All-American selection, Zavaleta spent his sophomore and junior years of high school in residency with the U.S. Soccer Under-17 Men's National Team in Bradenton, Fla. He concluded his two-year prep soccer career with 45 goals and 19 assists.

Zavaleta graduated early from high school—this past December—with a 3.80 GPA, then began training with the academy team of Major League Soccer's Real Salt Lake. He has volunteered locally as a youth soccer instructor and has served on his school's student council.

"At the high school level, Eriq Zavaleta is a man amongst boys," said Joe Sochacki, Zavaleta's club coach with Indiana Academy. "He's a big kid and he dominates games from a physical standpoint. He's very, very good in the air. He has the ability to shoot from distance. He's got that edge to him, 'I'm going to take control of the game.' And he does it."

Zavaleta has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Indiana 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.

Zavaleta joins recent Gatorade Indiana Boys Soccer Players of the Year A.J. Corrado (2009-10, Zionsville Community), Harrison Petts (2008-09, Zionsville Community), and Mitch Day (2007-08, Memorial) 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

###