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**SMYRNA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® DELAWARE GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 10, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Betnijah Laney of Smyrna High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Delaware Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Laney is the first Gatorade Delaware Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Smyrna 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 court, distinguishes Laney as Delaware's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Laney joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.)

The 6-foot senior forward led the Eagles to a 22-1 record entering the state semifinals against Sanford, scheduled for March 9. At the time of her selection, Laney was averaging 23.7 points, 10.0 rebounds, 4.4 steals, 4.3 assists and 1.2 blocks per game. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, she was a member of the USA Basketball Women's U17 World Championship Team last summer. Laney is also a two-time First Team All-State selection and was chosen to participate in both the McDonald's All-American Game and the Women's Basketball Coaches Association All-America Game this spring.

Laney has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as an elementary school motivational speaker and a youth basketball instructor.

"She's taken her game to the next level," said Billie Fox, head coach of rival Delmar High. "She's obviously a scorer, but beyond that she has the ability to makes passes and find the open player."

Laney remains undecided regarding 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.

Two-time winner Laney joins recent Gatorade Delaware Girls Basketball Players of the Year Dara Taylor (2008-09, Caravel Academy) and Elena Delle Donne (2007-08, Ursuline Academy) 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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