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**NORCROSS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® GEORGIA 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 Diamond DeShields of Norcross High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Georgia Girls Basketball Player of the Year. DeShields is the first Gatorade Georgia Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Norcross 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 DeShields as Georgia'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, DeShields 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-1 sophomore guard and forward has led the Blue Devils to a 26-3 record and a berth in the Class 5A state semifinals against Campbell High, scheduled for March 10. The returning ESPN RISE National Freshman of the Year, DeShields has averaged 20.6 points, 6.2 rebounds, 4.1 steals and 3.0 assists per game. Also the returning Class AAAAA Player of the Year as named by the Georgia Sports Writers Association, she produced 17.6 points, 7.8 rebounds, 2.6 steals and 2.1 assists per contest, leading Norcross to the 2010 Class AAAAA state championship as a freshman. DeShields averaged 9.0 points and 3.4 rebounds as a member of the USA Basketball U18 National Team that captured the gold medal at the 2010 FIBA Americas Championship this past summer.

Also a softball standout, DeShields has maintained a 3.00 GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating her time as a youth basketball instructor, she has volunteered locally on behalf of her church and the Jack and Jill of America service organization for African-American women.

"Diamond is one of the most athletic players you will see," said Norcross Head Coach Angie Hembree. "Her length, speed and vertical jump allow her to play any position from the point guard to the post. She can create off the drive or shoot the deep 3-pointer off the pass. Diamond can play above the rim, scoring on passes directly to the rim or tips on put back shots. She sets up her teammates' scoring by commanding double teams and hitting the open man. She is coachable, delightful and just plain fun to watch."

DeShields will begin her junior 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.

DeShields joins recent Gatorade Georgia Girls Basketball Players of the Year Kayla Lewis (2009-10, Southwest DeKalb), Anne Marie Armstrong (2008-09, Wesleyan School), and Alicia Manning (2007-08, Etowah) 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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