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**LINN-MAR HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® IOWA 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 Kiah Stokes of Linn-Mar High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Iowa Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Stokes is the second Gatorade Iowa Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Linn-Mar 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 Stokes as Iowa'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, Stokes 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-3 senior center averaged 25 points, 14.9 rebounds and 5.6 blocks per game this past season while shooting 72.1 percent from the floor and leading the Lions (22-4) to the Class 4A semifinals. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, Stokes is Iowa's career record-holder for blocked shots (515) and ranks fourth in career rebounds (1,239). She is Iowa's 2011 Miss Basketball winner and was selected to play in both the McDonald's High School All-American Game and the Women's Basketball Coaches Association All-America Game this spring.

Stokes has maintained a 4.01 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered as a youth basketball coach and on behalf of S.O.D.A, a school organization aimed at reminding students of the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

"Kiah Stokes is definitely an outstanding player," said Harold Youngblut, head coach of rival Waterloo East High. "She's not just an inside threat and she has become a very good passer and ball-handler. As a person, she handles her incredible ability with grace and respect."

Stokes has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Connecticut 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.

Two-time winner Stokes joins recent Gatorade Iowa Girls Basketball Players of the Year Jaime Printy (2008-09, Linn-Mar) and Kelly Krei (2007-08, City) 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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