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**BUTLER HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® NORTH CAROLINA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 10, 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 Cierra Burdick of Butler High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade North Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Burdick is the first Gatorade North Carolina Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Butler 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 Burdick as North Carolina'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, Burdick 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-2 senior guard and forward averaged 23.1 points, 15.3 rebounds, 5.4 assists, 5.0 blocks and 4.1 steals per game this past season, leading the Bulldogs (30-1) to the Class 4A state quarterfinals. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, Burdick shot 61 percent from the field, 48 percent from 3-point range and 85 percent from the free-throw line. A 2011 Women's Basketball Coaches Association High School All-America Game selection, she recorded 18.9 points, 10.3 rebounds, 3.5 assists, 2.5 steals and 1.6 blocks per contest as a junior, leading Butler to the Class 4A state championship in 2010. A returning ESPN RISE First Team All-American, Burdick has participated on the USA Basketball Women's U16 and U17 National Teams in each of the past two summers.

Burdick has maintained a 4.28 weighted GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, she has volunteered as the lead counselor at the Butler Bulldog Basketball Camp and on behalf of multiple charitable organizations to benefit area breast cancer survivors and underprivileged children, including the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots Foundation.

"Cierra Burdick is a phenom," said Butler head coach Mark Sanders. "Cierra is the definition of a scholar-athlete. She is an extremely hard worker and is very competitive in the classroom and on the court. She deserves everything that comes her way because she has worked so hard to get to where she is today. She is not only a great player but she is an even better leader, and the way she leads is what makes her so special."

Burdick has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Tennessee 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 Burdick joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Girls Basketball Players of the Year Asia Williams (2008-09, Hillside) and Candace Wood (2007-08, Victory Christian Center 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

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