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Contact: Ashley Ginascol (312-729-3622)

**CLEVELAND HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEW MEXICO BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 1, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Blake Swihart of Cleveland High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade New Mexico Baseball Player of the Year. Swihart is the first Gatorade New Mexico Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Cleveland 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 Swihart as New Mexico's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award announced in June, Swihart joins an elite alumni association of past state baseball award winners, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Roy Halladay (1994-95, Arvada West HS, Colo.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman HS, Tenn.), Chipper Jones (1989-90, Bolles School, Fla.), Derek Lee (1992-93, El Camino HS, Calif.) and John Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Prep, Wash.).

The 6-foot-1, 175-pound senior catcher and shortstop batted .545 with five home runs, 41 RBIs and 54 runs scored, leading the Storm (24-7) to the Class 5A state semifinals. A 2010 Aflac All-American and a two-time First Team All-State selection, Swihart also posted a .634 on-base percentage and stole 19 bases in 21 attempts.

Swihart has maintained a 4.02 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally at an area children's hospital, as a youth baseball camp counselor and as an elementary school guest motivational speaker.

"Blake Swihart is a tremendous athlete," said Steve Nunez, head coach of rival Goddard High. "He has all the tools to make it to the big leagues."

Swihart has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Texas this fall, but is projected as an early round selection in this month's Major League Baseball First-Year Player Draft.

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.

Swihart joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Baseball Players of the Year Sam Wilson (2009-10, Eldorado), Max Walla (2008-09; Albuquerque Academy), Wade Hinkle (2007-08, Del Norte), and Richard Bohlken (2006-07, La Cueva), 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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