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**FITCH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® CONNECTICUT SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 9, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Brianna Turgeon of Fitch High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Connecticut Softball Player of the Year. Turgeon is the first Gatorade Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Fitch 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 Turgeon as Connecticut's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Turgeon joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The 5-foot-5 senior shortstop batted .464 along with 30 runs scored, 22 RBI and 14 stolen bases this past season, leading the Falcons (18-7) to the second round of the Class LL state tournament. Turgeon ripped nine doubles, five home runs and four triples, drawing 25 walks. The state's returning Gatorade Softball Player of the Year, she produced a .955 slugging percentage and .615 on-base percentage. Also the 2010 Player of the Year as named by the *The New London Day*, Turgeon batted .500 as a junior with 17 RBI and three home runs. A three-time All-Area selection as named by *The New London Day* and *Norwich Bulletin*, she finished with a .382 batting average and 26 RBI as a sophomore, capturing Most Valuable Player honors in Fitch's 2009 Class LL state championship victory.

Also a soccer standout, Turgeon has maintained a 4.05 weighted GPA in the classroom and ranks No. 19 in her graduating class. An invited participant in both LeadAmerica's Congressional Student Leadership Conference and the People to People International educational exploration program, she has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple community-service initiatives in association with the National Honor Society, Key Club International, Students Against Drunk Driving and the March of Dimes Foundation.

"There is no player whom I have coached against that I admire and fear as much as Brianna Turgeon," said Bryan Burdick, head coach of rival Norwich Free Academy. "With one swing of the bat—which is potent and launched a 265-foot home run against my team this season and has caused almost all of the coaches in our conference to intentionally walk her when she steps into the batter's box—or the quick shuffling of her feet to a ball that would under normal circumstances be a base hit in the gap or up the middle, she can change the momentum of the game. She is truly a special athlete and young woman."

Turgeon has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Fordham University 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 Turgeon joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Softball Player of the Year, two-time winner Rachele Fico (2007-08 & 2008-09, Masuk), 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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