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**HILLHOUSE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE CONNECTICUT GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 21, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Precious Holmes of Hillhouse High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Connecticut Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Holmes is the second Gatorade Connecticut Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Hillhouse 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 track, distinguishes Holmes as Connecticut's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Holmes joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Allyson Felix (2001-02, Los Angeles Baptist, 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.), Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The 5-foot-4 sophomore captured three individual state championships this spring and led the Academics to the State Open title as a team. A returning Class M All-State selection as named by the Connecticut High School Coaches Association, Holmes won the 100-meter dash with a time of 12.03 seconds and broke the tape in the 200-meter dash in 24.58. She also finished first in the 400-meter dash with a meet-record time of 53.16 seconds, which ranked as the nation's No. 3 performance among prep competitors in 2011 at the time of her selection. At the New England Interscholastic Outdoor Track & Field Championships, Holmes placed first in the 100-meter dash in 12.29 and the 400-meter dash in 55.42. She also won both the 200- and 400-meter dash events at the 2010 New England championships as a freshman. At this month's New Balance Outdoor Nationals she ran the third leg of the second-place sprint medley relay quartet that finished in 3:59.87, and she placed second in the 400-meter dash in 53.26.

Also a cross country standout, Holmes has maintained a 3.14 GPA in the classroom at New Haven Academy, where she attends high school and which does not offer a track program. She has donated her time as a youth track instructor in addition to annually volunteering on behalf of her track club at a road race in New Haven.

"People always talk about once-in-a-lifetime athletes who really aren't that," said Hillhouse High Head Coach Gary Moore. "Precious is the first athlete that I'm able to really say I'll coach once in my lifetime. She's absolutely incredible. People are shocked and amazed to see a 400-meter runner that's also so good at cross country. It's all about attitude. She puts 100 percent into everything she does, and she does the best that she can do with the ability she has. Her work ethic has been absolutely phenomenal. She's the total package of what a coach looks for."

Holmes 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.

Holmes joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Lindsay Crevoiserat (2009-10, Glastonbury), Meg Ryan (2008-09, Fairfield Warde), and Anna Shields (2007-08, Lewis Mills) 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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