

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

**UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF NASHVILLE STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE TENNESSEE 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 Jordan Lavender of University School of Nashville as its 2010-11 Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Lavender is the first Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from University School of Nashville.

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 Lavender as Tennessee'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, Lavender 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-3 senior won four individual state championships this spring and led the Tigers to a fifth-place finish at the Division II state meet as a team. Lavender broke the tape in the 100-meter dash with a time of 12.07 seconds, the 200-meter dash in 24.61 and the 400 meters in 55.03. She also won the long jump with a leap of 19 feet, 0.5 inches, which ranked as the nation's No. 28 distance among prep competitors in 2011 at the time of her selection. A 12-time state champion, she was also ranked among the nation's top 100 performers this spring the 200 and the 400.

Lavender has maintained a 3.49 GPA in the classroom. A member of her church choir and youth group, she has volunteered locally as part of a fundraising campaign to benefit victims of the Haiti earthquake and as a youth track coach.

"Jordan consistently progressed from her freshman year, and this spring she posted remarkable performances at the big meets," said University School Coach Zaf Ahmed. "Once she steps on the track, it is all about business. She is able to block out any distractions and focus on the task at hand."

Lavender has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at the University of Virginia beginning 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.

Lavender joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year LaQuisha Jackson (2009-10, Howard School), Sharika Nelvis (2008-09, Nortide), and Jackie Coward (2007-08, West) 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.

###