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**KONAWAENA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® HAWAII GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 8, 2012) — In its 27<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Dawnyelle Awa of Konawaena High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Hawaii Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Awa is the second Gatorade Hawaii Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Konawaena 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 Awa as Hawaii'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, Awa joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Candace Parker (2003-04, 2002-03, & 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 5-foot-8 senior point guard led the Wildcats to a 28-3 record and their second straight Division I state title this past season. Awa averaged 11.2 points, 4.1 rebounds four assists and four steals per game while shooting 54 percent inside the 3-point arc. A four-time Division I All-Tournament Team selection, she was named MVP of the 2012 Iolani Classic.

Awa has maintained a 3.42 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as part of a fundraising campaign to benefit breast cancer research, as a youth basketball coach and referee, and on behalf of Disabled American Veterans.

"Dawnyelle Awa is a complete player with the whole package," said Mike Taylor, head coach at Punahou School. "She is a smart, fundamentally solid player who really drives their offense and defense."

Awa has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at Washington State 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 ESPNHS 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.

Awa joins recent Gatorade Hawaii Girls Basketball Players of the Year Maiki Viela (2010-11 & 2009-10, Lahainaluna High School), Kanisha Bello (2008-09, Waiakea), Jamie Smith (2007-08, Iolani School), Shawna-Lei Kuehu (2006 - 07, Punahou), Nancy Hoist (2003-04, Konawaena), and Megan Ching (2002-03, Kamehameha Schools) 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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