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**RIVERDALE BAPTIST SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MARYLAND GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 8, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Jonquel Jones of Riverdale Baptist School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Maryland Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Jones is the third Gatorade Maryland Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Riverdale Baptist 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 Jones as Maryland'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, Jones 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 6-foot-2 senior forward led the Crusaders to a 35-2 record and the National Association of Christian Athletes Division 1 Tournament championship this past season. Jones averaged 15.7 points, 15.7 rebounds, 2.5 steals, 2.4 assists and 1.2 blocks per game. A WBCA All-American Game selection, Jones was the MVP this season of the Geneva Rutherford Tournament and the More Than Basketball Tournament. She scored 18 points and pulled down 21 rebounds in a 57-54 win over Oak Hill Academy (Va.) in the NACA Division I championship game.

Jones has maintained a B average in the classroom. A member of both her school and church choirs, she has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach and as a mentor to special-needs children.

"Jonquel Jones can impact the game on both ends of the floor," said Rebecca Tillett, head coach at Forest Park (Woodbridge, Va.) High. "She uses her athleticism within the team concept. She can take over a game on the defensive side altering shots, getting deflections or boards. She can also take over the game offensively at a moment's notice."

Jones has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at Clemson 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.

Jones joins recent Gatorade Maryland Girls Basketball Players of the Year Taylor Brown (2010-11, Bishop McNamara High School), Kelsey Wolfe (2009-10, Seneca Valley), Tianna Hawkins (2008-09, Riverdale Baptist School), Tarik Hislop (2007-08, Paint Branch), Marah Strickland (2006 - 07, Towson Catholic), Wanisha Smith (2003-04, Riverdale Baptist School), and Kalika France (2002-03, Bishop McNamera) 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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