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**WOONSOCKET HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® RHODE ISLAND 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 Kailey Fugere of Woonsocket High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Rhode Island Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Fugere is the first Gatorade Rhode Island Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Woonsocket 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 Fugere as Rhode Island'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, Fugere 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-9 senior forward averaged 21.2 points, 11.6 rebounds, 2.7 blocks, 2.4 steals and 1.5 assists per game this past season, leading the Lady Novans (16-9) to the Division I state quarterfinals. A 2011 Second Team All-State selection, Fugere shot 59.7 percent from the field and 69.8 percent from the free throw line. The state's leading scorer as a senior, she concluded her prep basketball career with 1,360 points and 849 rebounds.

Fugere has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of a literacy-outreach program, as a volleyball and bowling coach for physically and intellectually challenged youth and with the Respite Program, serving families with special-needs children.

"Kailey Fugere can really play," said Gary Martinelli, head coach at Ponaganset High. "She is difficult to match up with because she is so smart and strong. She is very active and has good footwork and great hands."

Fugere will attend Rhode Island College, where she will play basketball, 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 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.

Fugere joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Girls Basketball Players of the Year Kelly Mannix (2010-11, Barrington High School), Allie Jones (2009-10, South Kingstown), Torey Jones (2008-09, La Salle Academy), Brittany Wilson (2007-08, St. Mary Academy-Bay View), Meredith Ward (2006 - 07, Westerly), Chelsea Marandola (2003-04, Johnston), and Joanna Skiba (2002-03, Classical) 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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