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**CLARKSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® TENNESSEE 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 **Bashaara Graves of Clarksville High School** as its **2011-12 Gatorade Tennessee Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Graves is the first Gatorade Tennessee Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Clarksville 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 Graves as Tennessee'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, Graves 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 Wildcats to a 36-0 record and a berth in the Class AAA state quarterfinals against Memphis Central High, scheduled for March 8. Graves averaged 21.3 points, 11.8 rebounds, 3.4 assists, 2.5 steals and 2.3 blocks per game entering the postseason round of eight. Selected to play in both the McDonald's and Women's Basketball Coaches Association All-American games, Graves shot 63.9 percent from the field and 73.7 percent from the free throw line in 2012. She averaged 17.9 points, 13.9 rebounds, 4.3 steals and 3.3 assists as a junior, leading the Warriors (32-4) to the 2011 Class AAA state tournament quarterfinal.

Graves has maintained a 3.30 GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating her time as a youth basketball instructor, she has volunteered as a peer counselor for students with special needs.

"Bashaara is a phenomenal, versatile basketball player," said Glen Fox, head coach at West Creek High. "I have watched her develop her game for five years now, and there really isn't a position that she can't play. Her leadership skills are also evident on her team. Many girls wilt under pressure and expectations. Bashaara did not, and will not. As an opposing coach, I am happy she is graduating, but as a fan of the game I will miss watching her play."

Graves has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at the University of Tennessee 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.

Graves joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Girls Basketball Players of the Year Shacobia Barbee (2010-11, Riverdale High School), Taylor Hall (2009-10, Morristown-Hamblen West), Faith Dupree (2008-09, Webb School of Knoxville), Glory Johnson (2007-08 & 2006 - 07, Webb School of Knoxville), Alex Fuller (2003-04, Shelbyville Central), and Amber Benjamin (2002-03, Coffee County CHigh School) 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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