

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Ashley Ginascol (312-729-3622)**

**OAKTON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® VIRGINIA 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 Caroline Coyer of Oakton High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Coyer is the second Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Oakton 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 Coyer as Virginia'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, Coyer 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-10 senior guard has led the Cougars to a 29-0 record and a berth in the Group AAA state semifinals against Woodside High, scheduled for March 7. Coyer averaged 14.3 points, 5.2 assists, 4.2 rebounds and 3.6 steals entering the state final four. A two-time Northern Region Player of the Year and a 2011 Group AAA First Team All-State selection, Coyer has scored 1,556 points and recorded 584 assists in her prep basketball career as one of two Group AAA players ever to reach 1,500 points and 500 assists.

Coyer has maintained a 3.67 GPA in the classroom. She has donated her time creating graphics and marketing materials for Fund It America, which raises money for wounded veteran associations. She has also volunteered locally at battered women's shelters and as a youth basketball and soccer coach.

"Caroline Coyer is a great team player, but don't get me wrong, when she's on the floor running the point it's obvious who's in charge," said TJ Dade, head coach at Robinson High. "She is an extension of her coach on the floor. She gets her teammates involved and makes everyone around her better."

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

Coyer joins recent Gatorade Virginia Girls Basketball Players of the Year Elizabeth Williams (2010-11 & 2009-10, Princess Anne High School), Tierra Ruffin-Pratt (2008-09 & 2007-08, T.C. Williams), Jasmine Thomas (2006 - 07, Oakton), Khadijah Whittington (2003-04, Woodrow Wilson), and Tiffany Green (2002-03, Washington-Lee) 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).

###