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**LAKE HIGHLAND PREPARATORY SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® FLORIDA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 22, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Joel Berry of Lake Highland Preparatory School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Berry is the first Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Lake Highland Preparatory 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 Berry as Florida's best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, Berry joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.), Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.) and Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas).

The 6-foot-1, 195-pound sophomore point guard averaged 23.1 points, 5.6 rebounds, 3.2 steals and 3.1 assists per game this past season, leading the Highlanders to the Class 4A state final. The 2011 Winter Park Rotary Tip-Off Classic MVP, Berry averaged 26.6 points per game in the state tournament, including a game-high 26 in the state final against Pine Crest.

Berry has maintained a 3.27 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a peer leader in his school community in addition to donating his time as a youth basketball coach and camp counselor.

"Joel Berry is one of the best players that we faced this year," said Eric Jones, head coach at West Orange High. "He scored 49 points against us and there was really nothing we could do to stop him. He is very difficult to defend and he has incredible stamina and determination."

Berry will begin his junior year of high school 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.

Berry joins recent Gatorade Florida Boys Basketball Players of the Year Austin Rivers (2010-11, Winter Park High School), Brandon Knight (2008-09 & 2009-10, Pine Crest School), Ray Shipman (2007-08, Monsignor Pace High School), and Nick Calathes (2006-07, Lake Howell) 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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