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**LINN-MAR HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® IOWA 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 Marcus Paige of Linn-Mar High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Iowa Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Paige is the second Gatorade Iowa Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Linn-Mar 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 Paige as Iowa'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, Paige 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-2, 190-pound senior point guard averaged 28.4 points, 4.0 rebounds, 3.5 assists and 2.7 steals per game this past season, leading the Lions (20-5) to the Class 4A semifinals. A 2012 McDonald's All-American Game selection and a 2012 Jordan Brand Classic game invitee, Paige is the No. 23 ranked recruit in the Class of 2012 as rated by ESPNU.

Paige has maintained a 4.07 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, he has volunteered locally as an elementary school motivational speaker, as a youth basketball coach and on behalf of Students OK Without Drugs and Alcohol (SODA).

"Marcus Paige is not only the best player in the state, he is also a phenomenal teammate and a winner," said Joe Barrer, head coach at Xavier High. "He represents Iowa well by more than just his play on a basketball court."

Paige has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at the University of North Carolina 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.

Paige joins recent Gatorade Iowa Boys Basketball Players of the Year Jarrod Uthoff (2010-11, Jefferson High School), Harrison Barnes (2008-09 & 2009-10, Ames), Matt Gatens (2007-08, City High School), and Brent Barz (2006-07, Johnston) 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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