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**BAY CITY WESTERN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MICHIGAN 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 Matt Costello of Bay City Western High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Michigan Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Costello is the first Gatorade Michigan Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Bay City Western 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 Costello as Michigan'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, Costello 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-10, 245-pound senior forward and center averaged 25.1 points, 17.1 rebounds, 3.9 assists and 3.9 blocks per game this past season, leading the Warriors (18-6) to the Class 4A regional semifinals. Also the 2010-11 Gatorade Michigan Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Costello is a 2012 Michigan Mr. Basketball finalist.

Costello has maintained a 3.73 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, he is an accomplished trumpet player in his school's jazz band and has volunteered locally as an elementary school tutor and as a youth basketball coach and referee.

"When you think about all of the qualities it takes to be a team leader, Matt Costello exemplifies those characteristics," said Bay City Western athletic director Michael Thayer. "His work ethic is second to none. He does not take anything for granted and has worked extremely hard to get where he is today."

Costello has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at Michigan State 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.

Two-time winner Costello joins Gatorade Michigan Boys Basketball Players of the Year Ray McCallum (2008-09 & 2009-10, Detroit Country Day School), Brad Redford (2007-08, Frankenmuth High School), and Corperryale 'Manny' Harris (2006-07, Redford) 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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