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**APPLE VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MINNESOTA 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 Tyus Jones of Apple Valley High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Minnesota Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Jones is the second Gatorade Minnesota Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Apple Valley 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 Jones as Minnesota'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, Jones 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, 175-pound sophomore point guard averaged 28.1 points, 8.0 assists, 4.8 rebounds and 3.4 steals per game this past season, leading the Eagles (23-6) to the Class 4A sectional finals. A returning Honorable Mention All-State selection as named by the Associated Press, Jones shot 55.6 percent from the field, 44.0 percent from 3-point range and 86.6 percent from the free throw line. A member of USA Basketball's U16 National Team, he averaged 4.6 points and 5.6 assists during an unbeaten five-game run to the 2011 FIBA Americas U16 Championship this past summer.

Jones has maintained a 3.05 GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating his time as a youth basketball instructor, he has volunteered locally on behalf of Feed My Starving Children and as a motivational speaker for elementary school children.

"He is Minnesota basketball," said John Sheehan, head coach at Lakeville South High. "He makes everyone who plays against him say, 'Wow!' He could go to any college and make them a contender. He's the best kid I have ever seen play the game."

Jones 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.

Jones joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Boys Basketball Players of the Year Joe Coleman (2010-11, Hopkins High School), Kevin Noreen (2009-10, Minnesota Transitions Charter School), Mike Bruesewitz (2008-09, Henry Sibley High School), Jordan Taylor (2007-08, Benilde-St. Margaret's School), and Cole Aldrich (2006-07, Jefferson) 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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