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**UPPER ROOM CHRISTIAN ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® NORTH CAROLINA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 22, 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 Rodney Purvis of Upper Room Christian Academy as its 2011-12 Gatorade North Carolina Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Purvis is the first Gatorade North Carolina Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Upper Room Christian Academy.

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 Purvis as North Carolina'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, Purvis 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).

A 6-foot-4, 190-pound senior guard, Purvis led the Eagles to a 24-16 record and the Greater Carolina High School Athletic Association championship this past season. Named GCHSAA Most Valuable Player, Purvis scored 24 points in the 85-61, title-clinching victory against Quality Education Academy. A McDonald's All-American and Jordan Brand Classic selection, he averaged 26.1 points, 6.7 rebounds and 4.2 assists per game. An invitee to the LeBron James Skills Academy, Adidas Nations Camp and National Basketball Players Association Top 100 Camp, he led the CP3 All-Stars to the semifinals of the Amateur Athletic Union 17U Division I National Championships this past summer.

Purvis has maintained a 3.29 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally at the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina and as a motivational speaker to youth student-athletes.

"Rodney Purvis is very explosive and attacks the basket with so much force," said Isaac Pitts, head coach at Quality Education Academy. "Yet, he's always in complete control of his body, and his demeanor on the court never changes regardless of the circumstances. We all know of his greatness as a player, but I believe he's an even better person."

Purvis has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at North Carolina 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.

Purvis joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Boys Basketball Players of the Year Marshall Plumlee (2010-11, Christ School), Reggie Bullock (2009-10, Kinston), Ryan Kelly (2008-09, Ravenscroft School), and Ty Walker (2006-07 & 2007-08, New Hanover High School), 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).

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