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**FRIENDS' CENTRAL SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® PENNSYLVANIA 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 Amile Jefferson of Friends' Central School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Jefferson is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Friends' Central 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 Jefferson as Pennsylvania'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, Jefferson 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-8 senior forward led the Phoenix to a 21-5 record and the Pennsylvania Independent Schools championship this past season. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Jefferson averaged 19.9 points, 10.2 rebounds and 2.7 blocks per game. The nation's No. 18 recruit in the Class of 2012 as ranked by ESPNU, he has been selected to play in the McDonald's All-American game.

Jefferson has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of the Police Athletic League and youth sports programs.

"Amile Jefferson has great touch, feel, body control and an uncanny ability to score in the paint," said Paul Biancardi, National Director, ESPN Basketball Recruiting. "He's a guy who can rebound out of his area, block shots and always plays with good energy."

Jefferson remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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 Jefferson joins Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Basketball Players of the Year Tony Chennault (2009-10, Neumann-Goretti), Maalik Wayns (2008-09, Roman Catholic High School), Brian Walsh (2007-08, Moon Area High School), and Jeff Jones (2006-07, Monsignor Bonner) 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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