

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Adam Woullard (312-729-3627)

**HUNTINGTON PREP. STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® WEST VIRGINIA 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 Andrew Wiggins of Huntington Prep as its 2011-12 Gatorade West Virginia Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Wiggins is the second Gatorade West Virginia Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Huntington Prep.

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 Wiggins as West Virginia'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, Wiggins 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-7 sophomore forward averaged 24.2 points, 8.5 rebounds, 4.1 assists and 2.7 blocks per game, leading the Express to a 28-2 record this past season. Rated as the nation's No. 1 recruit in the Class of 2014 by ESPNU, Wiggins was MVP of the Ironton Classic and the Tri-State Classic, and was named to the Flyin' to the Hoop All-Tournament team.

Wiggins has maintained a B average while taking courses at St. Joseph's Central Catholic High School. He has volunteered locally on behalf of the Ronald McDonald House and youth basketball camps.

"Wiggins is an extremely skilled player with elite athleticism," said Paul Biancardi, National Director, ESPN Basketball Recruiting. "He can play on the perimeter and on the post. He's got a quick first step and can get to the basket whenever he wishes, and his jump shot has range beyond the 3-point line. He has all the tools to be successful, from a skill standpoint and a physical standpoint."

Wiggins 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.

Wiggins joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Boys Basketball Players of the Year Chase Fischer (2010-11, Ripley High School), Noah Cottrill (2009-10, Logan), Aaron Dobson (2008-09, South Charleston High School), Bryant Irwin (2007-08, Bridgeport Senior High School), and Patrick Patterson (2006-07, Huntington) 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.

###