

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

**MERCER ISLAND HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE WASHINGTON BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 15, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Jordan Morris of Mercer Island High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Washington Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Morris is the first Gatorade Washington Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Mercer Island 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 field, distinguishes Morris as Washington's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Morris joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-11, 175-pound junior midfielder has led the Islanders to an 11-1-4 record and a berth in the Class 3A state tournament, scheduled to begin May 16. Morris scored 21 goals and passed for 15 assists in the regular season. The 2012 KingCo League MVP, Morris is a two-time First Team All-League selection. He entered the postseason with 31 goals and 26 assists in his prep soccer career.

Morris has maintained a 3.92 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally with a fundraising campaign to benefit juvenile diabetes research, as a peer mentor and advisor and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with his church youth group.

"Jordan Morris is one of the best soccer players I have seen come from this state in a long time," said Shaun Warner, head coach of rival Lake Washington High. "What makes it hard to match against him is his overall speed and how quick he is. I have never seen a player get to full speed as fast as he does."

Morris has verbally committed to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at Stanford University beginning in the fall of 2013.

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.

Morris joins recent Gatorade Washington Boys Soccer Players of the Year Aaron Kovar (2010-11, Garfield High School), Nick Palodichuk, (2009-10, Camas), Michael Harris (2008-09, Shorecrest High School), Brent Richards (2007-08, Camas), and Brandon Kelley (2006-2007, Snohomish) 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.

###