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**CANYON DEL ORO HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ARIZONA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Kayla Bonstrom of Canyon del Oro High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Arizona Softball Player of the Year. Bonstrom is the third Gatorade Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Canyon del Oro 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 Bonstrom as Arizona's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Bonstrom joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The 5-foot-8 senior pitcher and outfielder led the Dorados (33-5) to the Division II state championship this past season. Bonstrom batted .603 with 16 home runs, 71 runs scored, 63 RBI and a 1.293 slugging percentage. In the circle, the 2012 Division II Coaches High School Softball Player of the Year posted a 17-3 record with a 3.12 ERA and 128 strikeouts in 130 innings-pitched. She won three state championships in four years and concluded her prep softball career with a .535 batting average and 34 home runs.

Bonstrom has maintained a 4.35 weighted GPA in the classroom. A member of the Mu Alpha Theta mathematics honor society and the Canyon del Oro Science Olympiad team, she has volunteered locally as a youth softball coach and mentor.

"Kayla was the difference on both sides of the ball for Canyon del Oro," said Randy Anway, head coach of rival Ironwood Ridge High. "She is not a dominant pitcher but she competes on every pitch. And she is a very good hitter."

Bonstrom has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Stanford 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.

Bonstrom joins recent Gatorade Arizona Softball Players of the Year Mattie Fowler (2010-11, Canyon del Oro High School), Dallas Escobedo (2009-10, St. Mary's Catholic), and three-time winner Kenzie Fowler (2006-2007, 2007-08 & 2008-09, Canyon del Oro), 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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