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**TROY BUCHANAN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® MISSOURI SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 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 Emily Crane of Troy Buchanan High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Missouri Softball Player of the Year. Crane is the first Gatorade Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Troy Buchanan 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 Crane as Missouri's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Crane 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-7 senior shortstop led the Trojans (29-4) to the Class 4A state championship this past season. Crane batted .563 with five home runs, 52 runs scored, 28 RBI and 24 stolen bases, while setting a state single-season record with 63 base hits. The Gateway Athletic Conference South and All-Metro Player of the Year, she was also a two-time First Team All-State selection and broke state career records for hits (205) and runs scored (168).

Crane has maintained a 3.92 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of her church youth group and a volunteer math tutor in her school, she has also donated her time on behalf of local food and blood-donation drives.

"Her speed and power make her so valuable and dangerous as a player," said Brad Schellert, head coach at Timberland High. "Crane is one of the top players I've seen as a coach in the last 15 years."

Crane has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Missouri 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.

Crane joins recent Gatorade Missouri Softball Players of the Year Paige Parker (2010-11, Truman High School), Jessica Damico (2009-10, Pacific), Nicole Hudson (2008-09, Webb City) and Courtney Conley (2007-08, Eureka) 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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