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**BISHOP O'CONNELL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® VIRGINIA 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 Tori Finucane of Bishop O'Connell High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Virginia Softball Player of the Year. Finucane is the second Gatorade Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Bishop O'Connell 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 Finucane as Virginia's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Finucane 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 junior pitcher led the Knights (27-1) to the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference tournament title and the Virginia Independent Schools state championship this past season. Finucane posted a 27-1 record with a 0.09 ERA and 332 strikeouts in 161 innings-pitched. She allowed 41 hits and walked 22 batters, holding opponents to a .077 batting average. At the plate, the two-time WCAC Player of the Year hit .363 with two home runs and 25 RBI.

Finucane has maintained a 3.57 GPA in the classroom. Selected as the editor-in-chief of her school paper, The Visor, for the 2012-13 school year, she has volunteered locally as a youth softball coach and mentor.

"There is nobody in this area better than her, nobody," said Tom Camera, head coach of rival St. John's College High. "She's got a drop ball, slider, unbelievable changeup, she moves the ball around the plate, she throws strikes on the outside and inside—wherever you put the glove, that's where she puts the ball."

Finucane has made a verbal commitment to attend the University of Missouri on an athletic scholarship 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.

Finucane joins recent Gatorade Virginia Softball Players of the Year Kelly Heinz (2010-11, Lee-Davis High School), Chelsey Dunham (2009-10, South County Secondary School), Caroline Williams (2008-09, Loudoun Valley) and Caitlyn Delahaba, (2007-08, Broad Run) 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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