

Contact: Adam Woullard (312-729-3627)

**KELL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE GEORGIA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 20, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Kendell Williams of Kell High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Georgia Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Williams is the first Gatorade Georgia Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Kell 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 track, distinguishes Williams as Georgia's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Williams joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Allyson Felix (2001-02, Los Angeles Baptist, 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.), Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The 5-foot-9 junior won three individual Class 4A state championships this spring and led the Longhorns to a fifth-place finish as a team. The state's two-time returning Gatorade Girls Track and Field Athlete of the Year, Williams won the 100-meter high hurdles with a time of 13.49 seconds, while clearing 5 feet, 8 inches to win the high jump and leaping 20 feet, 8.5 inches to capture the long jump. Her best marks in each of those events rank among the nation's top three performances by prep competitors in 2012 at the time of her selection. She also set the national junior class record in the heptathlon.

Williams has maintained a 3.71 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of a school group that helps feed the homeless, and she participates in group activities with orphaned children in Cobb County.

"Kendell leads by example with her hard work and consistency," said Kell High Head Coach Andi Jenkins. "Her accomplishments speak for themselves, but she is also one of the most humble athletes I have ever met."

Williams will begin her senior 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.

Three-time winner Williams joins recent Gatorade Georgia Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Chalonda Goodman (2007-08 & 2008-09, Newnan) 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.

###