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**MCDONOGH 35 COLLEGE PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE LOUISIANA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 20, 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 Marcquita Stalbert of McDonogh 35 College Preparatory High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Louisiana Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Stalbert is the first Gatorade Louisiana Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from McDonogh 35 College Preparatory 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 Stalbert as Louisiana'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, Stalbert 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 sophomore won three individual Class 4A state titles this spring and led the Roneagles to the state championship as a team. Stalbert won the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.67 seconds, captured the 200-meter dash in 23.96 and won the 400-meter run in 53.73. She also ran the opening leg on the 4x200-meter relay quartet, which broke the tape in 1:38.89.

Stalbert has maintained a 3.07 GPA in the classroom. A peer tutor in her school, she has volunteered locally on behalf of a program that provides food and toys for underprivileged families during the holidays.

"Marcquita is a very focused and dedicated runner," said McDonogh #35 coach Frank Daggs. "Every time she takes the track, the sky is the limit. With her great work ethic, I can see her achieving whatever she wants in the future."

Stalbert will begin her junior 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.

Stalbert joins recent Gatorade Louisiana Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Morgann LeLeux (2010-11, Catholic High School), Merritt Van Meter (2009-10, Metairie Park Country Day School), Kim Francis (2008-09, Nortide), and Rachel Laurent (2007-08, Vanderbilt Catholic) 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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