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**HOMER-CENTER HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA 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 Angel Piccirillo of Homer-Center High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Piccirillo is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Homer-Center 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 Piccirillo as Pennsylvania'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, Piccirillo 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 senior won the 800-meter run with a time of 2:09.16 and the 1,600-meter run in 4:39.32 at the Class AA state championships, leading the Wildcats to a fifth-place finish as a team. Also the state's 2011-12 Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Piccirillo was second at this month's adidas Dream Mile. Her state title-winning clocking in the 1,600 ranked as the nation's No. 1 time among prep competitors in 2012 at the time of her selection.

Piccirillo has maintained a 3.35 GPA in the classroom. The vice president of the senior class, she has volunteered locally on behalf of the Salvation Army, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, and blood-donation drives.

"Angel doesn't run as if she is running from something, but rather toward something," said Homer-Center coach Michael Gentile. "Her dedication and commitment to excellence as an athlete is only surpassed by her dedication and commitment in the classroom."

Piccirillo has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at Villanova 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.

Piccirillo joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Leah Nugent (2010-11, Abington Senior High School), Shelley Black (2009-10, Coughlin), Fawn Miller (2008-09, Lakeview), and Chanelle Price (2007-08, Easton Area) 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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