

Contact: Adam Woullard (312-729-3627)

**TENNESSEE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE TENNESSEE 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 Jennifer Cannon of Tennessee High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Cannon is the first Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Tennessee 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 Cannon as Tennessee'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, Cannon 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 three individual state championships this spring and led the Vikings to a second-place finish as a team at the Class AAA state meet. Cannon won the pentathlon with 3,788 points, the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 14.17 seconds and the 300-meter hurdles in 43.09. She also placed second in the long jump with a leap of 18 feet, 2.5 inches and third in the 100-meter dash in 12.44. The owner of nine school records, she placed second in the heptathlon at this month's New Balance Outdoor Nationals with 4,801 points.

Cannon has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally with the Special Olympics, as a peer tutor with Tennessee High's special needs students and as a youth track coach and mentor.

"Jennifer Cannon is an awesome talent," said Bob Bingham, head coach of rival Dobyns-Bennett High. "She almost won the state meet for her team by herself. She combines class and dignity with her prodigious talent to be a champion."

Cannon has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at Vanderbilt University beginning 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.

Cannon joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Jordan Lavender (2010-11, University School of Nashville), LaQuisha Jackson (2009-10, Howard School), Sharika Nelvis (2008-09, Nortide), and Jackie Coward (2007-08, West) 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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