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**GRANDVIEW HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MISSOURI BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 21, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Dapo Akinmoladun of Grandview High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Missouri Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Akinmoladun is the first Gatorade Missouri Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Grandview 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 Akinmoladun as Missouri's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Akinmoladun joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ryan Hall (1999-01, Big Bear HS, Calif.), Meb Keflezighi (1993-94, San Diego HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.) and Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.).

The 6-foot-3, 178-pound senior hurdler and sprinter won individual state titles in the 110-meter hurdles with a time of 13.56 seconds and the 300-meter hurdles in 37.34 this spring and earned fifth place in the 200-meter dash, crossing the line in 22.41 to lead the Bulldogs to the Class 3 state championship as a team. A two-time First Team All-State honoree, Akinmoladun set a state record in the 110 hurdles at the Kansas Relays, breaking the tape in 13.75. His state title-winning time in the 110 hurdles ranked as the nation's No. 5 performance among prep competitors in 2012 at the time of his selection.

Akinmoladun has maintained a 3.78 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the debate team, he has served as the president of his school's Technology Student Association and volunteered locally on behalf multiple community-service initiatives in association with the National Honor Society.

"Watching Dapo Akinmoladun compete this spring was a treat," said Clay Weldy, head coach at Cassville High. "He is a great athlete and a fierce competitor. You do not see hurdlers like him very often and I'm excited to see how he competes at the next level."

Akinmoladun has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on an athletic scholarship at the University of Nebraska 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.

Akinmoladun joins recent Gatorade Missouri Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Daniel Everett (2010-11, Westminster Christian Academy), Dorial Green (2009-10, Hillcrest), Nick Happe (2008-09, Francis Howell North), and Maurice Mitchell (2007-08, Raytown South) 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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