

Contact: Adam Woullard (312-729-3627)

**BRATTLEBORO UNION HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT 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 Jacob Ellis of Brattleboro Union High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Vermont Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Ellis is the first Gatorade Vermont Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Brattleboro Union 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 Ellis as Vermont'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, Ellis 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-1, 145-pound senior won the 1,500-meter run at the Division I state meet this spring with a state-record time of 3:57.33, which ranked No. 24 nationally among prep competitors in 2012 at the time of his selection. Ellis also won the 800-meter run in 1:59.05 and placed fifth in the 200-meter dash in 23.64, leading the Colonels to a fifth-place finish as a team. Also the state-record holder in the 800 (1:54.01), he concluded his prep track career with seven state titles.

Ellis has maintained an A average in the classroom. An accomplished trumpet player and singer, he has participated in numerous shows with the New England Youth Theater company and volunteered locally as a middle school track official.

"Jacob sets high standards and goals and works very hard to achieve them," said John Dimick, head coach of Brattleboro Union High. "His season is even more remarkable considering that his leg was run over by a car midway through the fall cross country season."

Ellis will attend Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, where he will compete with the track & field team.

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.

Ellis joins recent Gatorade Vermont Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Mike DiMambro (2009-10 & 2010-11, Essex High School), Adron Pitmon (2008-09, Mt. Mansfield Union), and Ken Bunnell (2007-08, St. Johnsbury Academy) 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.

###