

Contact: Adam Woullard (312-729-3627)

**WHITE RIVER HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE WASHINGTON 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 Marcus Dickson of White River High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Washington Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Dickson is the first Gatorade Washington Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from White River 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 Dickson as Washington'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, Dickson 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, 160-pound senior won the 800-meter run in 1:52.84 and the 1,600-meter run in 4:10.79 at the Class 2A state meet this spring, leading the Hornets to a second-place finish as a team. Dickson also placed second in the 3,200-meter run with a time of 9:04.91. A two-time South Puget Sound League Track Athlete of the Year, his best times in the 800 (1:49.33), 1,500 (3:54.44), 1,600 (4:05.83) and mile (4:03.18) all ranked among the nation's top 15 performances by prep competitors in 2012 at the time of his selection.

Dickson has maintained a 3.72 GPA in the classroom. An Eagle Scout, he has volunteered locally with White River High special-needs students, in neighborhood beautification projects and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with his church youth group.

"Marcus Dickson is so much more talented than the rest of our league, but each and every week he seemed to find himself a new personal challenge," said Brian Meyer, head coach of rival Fife High. "I was impressed by the workload he took on at state to try to win the team title. Running all three distance races and anchoring the 1600 relay is a crazy plan, but Marcus was willing to do it for his teammates."

Dickson has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at Brigham Young 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.

Dickson joins recent Gatorade Washington Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Kasen Williams (2010-11, Skyline High School), Derek Eager (2009-10, Tahoma), Shane Moskowitz (2008-09, Central Kitsap), and Miles Unterreiner (2007-08, Gig Harbor) 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.

###