

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: 1-800-88-GATOR (42867)

**Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year:
Tina Charles**

NYC standout named nation's top performer

CHICAGO (April 6, 2006) — Entering its third decade of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade® Thirst Quencher in partnership with *Scholastic Coach & Athletic Director* magazine, today announced Tina Charles of Christ the King High School in Middle Village, N.Y. as its 2005-06 National Girls Basketball Player of the Year.

Charles, a 6-foot-4-inch senior forward, averaged 26.5 points, 14.8 rebounds and 5.2 blocked shots per game this season on her way to being named WBCA National Player of the Year and "Miss Basketball" for New York state. She was selected as a McDonald's All-American and tabbed New York City Player of the Year by *Newsday*, the *Daily News* and the *New York Post*. She broke the school single game scoring record with 49 points against Bishop Ford High School earlier this season and owns the school record with 1,224 career rebounds.

Charles' play led Christ the King to its second straight undefeated season and state championship, as well as the No. 1 spot in the season's final USA TODAY Super 25 rankings. The Royals notched wins over some of the nation's best teams on their way to a 30-0 record. In winning the prestigious Nike Tournament of Champions – where Charles was named tournament MVP – Christ the King beat four teams ranked among the final USA TODAY Super 25 (No. 2 Collins Hill HS/Suwanee, Ga.; No. 4 Troy HS/Fullerton, Calif.; No. 19 St. Mary's HS/Phoenix; No. 23 Ursuline Academy/Wilmington, Del.). The Royals also handed their New York rival – No. 5 Murry Bergtraum – its only two losses of the season, including a 79-66 win in the New York State Federation Class AA championship game.

Charles' standard of excellence extends to the classroom, where she maintains a 3.82 GPA and scored 1080 on the SAT. On her free weekends, she assists her mother at a shelter for battered women and serves as a youth coach at basketball camps.

Charles plans to attend University of Connecticut in the fall.

-more-

“Tina may be the most gifted player to ever play here,” says Bob Mackey, head coach at Christ the King. “She has great size, speed and agility, but what sets her apart from the rest is her outstanding work ethic.”

“Without question, Tina is deserving of recognition as the nation’s best high school girls basketball player based on her performance and the tremendous ability she’s demonstrated,” said Gatorade Senior Vice President of Sports Marketing Tom Fox. “But she is also a shining example to peers and aspiring young players of what a leader and a student-athlete should be. She represents everything we hope for in a Gatorade Player of the Year recipient.”

The Gatorade Player of the Year program recognizes one winner in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia in football and baseball (boys), volleyball and softball (girls), as well as soccer, basketball, and track & field (boys and girls). Each state winner, selected by a panel of sport-specific experts in conjunction with a national media advisory board, is chosen based on his or her outstanding accomplishments on and off the field of play. In addition to athletic performance, award criteria include the achievement in the classroom and overall character. Previous Gatorade National Player of the Year award winners include:

- WNBA all-time leading scorer and rebounder Lisa Leslie
- Beach volleyball gold medalist Kerri Walsh
- Reigning 200-meter world champion Allyson Felix
- NFL all-time leading rusher Emmitt Smith
- Two-time NFL Most Valuable Player Peyton Manning
- Reigning American League Most Valuable Player Alex Rodriguez
- Captain of the U.S. men’s national soccer team Claudio Reyna

For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a list of past winners, and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit www.gatorade.com/playeroftheyear.

###

PAST GATORADE NATIONAL GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR HONOREES

Year	Name	High School	Status
2005-06	Tina Charles	Christ the King/Middle Village, NY	High School Senior
2004-05	Abby Waner	ThunderRidge/Highlands Ranch, CO	Duke Univ.
2003-04	Candace Parker	Naperville Central/Naperville, IL	Univ. of Tennessee
2002-03	Candace Parker	Naperville Central/Naperville, IL	Univ. of Tennessee
2001-02	Ann Strother	Highlands Ranch/Highlands Ranch, CO	Univ. of Connecticut
2000-01	Shyra Ely	Ben Davis/Indianapolis, IN	San Antonio Silver Stars
1999-00	Shereka Wright	Copperas Cove/Copperas Cove, TX	Phoenix Mercury
1998-99	Nicole Kaczmariski	Sachem North/Lake Rononkoma, NY	Professional/Europe
1997-98	Tamika Williams	Chaminade-Julienne/Dayton, OH	Minnesota Lynx
1996-97	Nikki Teasley	St. John's at Prospect Hall/Frederick, MD	Washington Mystics
1995-96	Jamie Walz	Highlands/Ft. Thomas, KY	Western Kentucky Grad.
1994-95	Stephanie McCarty	Seeger/West Lebanon, IN	Univ. of Toledo (Coach)
1993-94	Monick Foote	Samford/Wilmington, DE	Univ. of Virginia Grad.
1992-93	La'Keshia Frett	Phoebus/Hampton, VA	New York Liberty
1991-92	Katie Smith	Logan/Logan, OH	Detroit Shock
1990-91	Michelle Marciniak	Central Catholic/Allentown, PA	Retired from WNBA
1989-90	Lisa Leslie	Morningside/Inglewood, CA	L.A. Sparks
1988-89	Lisa Harrison	Southern/Louisville, KY	Retired from WNBA
1987-88	Vicki Hall	Brebeuf Preparatory/Indianapolis, IN	Retired from WNBA
1986-87	Kris Durham	Union Catholic/Scotch Plains, NJ	Seaton Hall Grad.
1985-86	Susan Anderson	Mt. Baker/Deming, WA	Univ. of Texas Grad.