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For Immediate Release

### **“Rocket” to Blast Off for the Wizards**

Secaucus, NJ - According to Wikipedia.com, a rocket is defined as “A missile, spacecraft, aircraft, or other vehicle which obtains thrust from a rocket engine.” To the Harlem Wizards, their definition involves Rashaan “Rocket” Barner, whose athletic thrusts have amazed crowds across the world since he joined the Wizards in 2003. Standing at only 6’0, his “engine” includes an incredible 48-inch vertical leap which leads to gravity-defying dunks that bring energy and enthusiasm into the arena wherever the Wizards perform. As a seasoned veteran of the Wizards, he is sure to bring the same excitement to the team for the upcoming 2010-2011 season.

A native of Newark, New Jersey, Rashaan Barner’s rocket-like explosiveness enabled him to have an illustrious college career. While not many players can claim to be All-Americans at two different colleges, Rashaan accomplished that feat at Union County College (where he was also inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2002) and William Paterson University. During his time at UCC, the Rocket averaged 22.5 points per game and 8.5 rebounds per game, was a two-time Garden State Athletic Conference (GSAC) Player of the Year, and Kodak First Team All-American. After dominating the Junior College ranks, Rashaan moved on to William Paterson University, where he showed the qualities of a winner in leading his William Paterson team to the National Championship Game in 2001. Despite his small stature, Rashaan averaged 10 rebounds per game during this season, a product of not only his leaping ability but also his extraordinary heart and desire. He was no slouch on the offensive end either, averaging 19 points per game, being named First Team All-New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC), and displaying the high-flying artistry that has brought him to the threshold of stardom with the Wizards today.

Speaking of stardom, at the completion of his collegiate career, Rashaan demonstrated star qualities by appearing in Nike basketball ads with LeBron James and the late Bernie Mac and Reebok ads with Jamal Crawford and Jay Z. He also was a Semi-Finalist on ESPN’s City Slam in 2006. But, despite his growing fame and recognition, it was his desire to give back to the community and bring joy to children that caused the Rocket to join the Harlem Wizards back in 2003. The experience has been all that Rashaan dreamed of and more. As Rashaan said, “Being able to interact with people from all over the world and bringing the fun to the

game of basketball has made it an honor for me to be a member of the Wizards for the past seven years.” Rashaan pointed out that despite all of his accolades in college, his proudest basketball moment has come as a member of the Wizards, when they beat the Hungarian National Team back in 2004.

Rashaan described his role on the team as a “do-it-all guy,” who does whatever is necessary to get the crowds on their feet. This often involves playing the role of supreme dunker, but that doesn’t stop Rashaan from getting into the action of using his rocket-like speed to start a fast break or his impressive array of ball handling tricks to dazzle the audience. He has also enjoyed the camaraderie of the Wizards and described his teammates as “a great group of guys that are like brothers to me.” Indeed, the chemistry displayed by the Wizards is impressive and by seeing how well they work together and enjoy being together, they are an excellent model of teamwork - a group of individuals functioning as a cohesive, highly entertaining unit.

Off the court, Rashaan describes himself as a down-to-earth guy. He enjoys watching football, roots for the Pittsburgh Steelers, and snacks on jolly ranchers and gummy bears. Entertaining children has a certain appeal to Rashaan, because he is a father of two children, 11 and 4, as well. After his playing career is finished, it is his long-term career goal to get into teaching and coaching so he can continue to positively affect children’s lives in the same way he currently does as a Wizards player. His advice to children is to, “Follow your dreams, dream big, and don’t let anything stop you from reaching your dreams.” Rashaan is a living example of this advice as he is currently taking online classes to reach his aspiration of receiving his degree in Business Management from the University of Phoenix. It is this type of work ethic that has allowed Rashaan to achieve success throughout his life both on and off the court.

Rashaan can be considered an inspiration to Wizards fans worldwide and by watching him soar through the air as a member of the Wizards during the upcoming 2010-2011, fans will see that the sky is truly the limit.

**Fitness Fact** - To stay in shape, Rashaan jogs for a mile each morning. He does this to improve his endurance and conditioning. He also stays away from fried foods and eats a banana every day to increase his potassium intake.