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**SKYLINE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ARIZONA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 30, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Boyd Vander Kooi of Skyline High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Arizona Baseball Player of the Year. Vander Kooi is the first Gatorade Arizona Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Skyline 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 field, distinguishes Vander Kooi as Arizona's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Vander Kooi joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo High School, Mich.), Jon Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Preparatory School, Wash.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman High School, Tenn.), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas), Rick Porcello (2006-2007, Seaton Hall Preparatory School, N.J.) and Kris Bryant (2009-10, Bonanza High School, Nev.).

The 6-foot-5, 210-pound senior right-handed pitcher and shortstop posted a 6-1 record with a 1.49 ERA and 61 strikeouts in 47 innings this past season, leading the Coyotes to a 20-8-1 record and the Class 6A postseason play-in game. Named the 2017 Class 6A Player of the Year by the Arizona Baseball Coaches Association, he also batted .512 with six home runs, 29 RBI and 12 stolen bases.

Vander Kooi has volunteered locally on behalf of youth baseball programs. "It has been a great joy to watch Boyd Vander Kooi grow as an athlete and as a young man," said Skyline head coach Patrick Herrera. "He has matured into a fine young adult who has proven if you set your mind to something you can accomplish it."

Vander Kooi has maintained a 3.60 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Arizona State University 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 the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Vander Kooi joins recent Gatorade Arizona Baseball Players of the Year Nick Brueser (2015-16, Hamilton High School), Tyler Wyatt (2014-15, Liberty High School), Tyler Frost (2013-14, Greenway High School), Riley Unroe (2012-13, Desert Ridge High School), Mitch Nay (2011-12, Hamilton High School), Kevin Cron (2010-11, Mountain Pointe High School), Taylor Kaczmarek (2009-10, Desert Ridge High School), Jake Barrett (2008-09, Desert Ridge High School), Jaff Decker (2007-08, Sunrise Mountain High School), and Tim Alderson (2006-07, Horizon High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Boyd will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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 www.gatorade.com/poy.

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