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**WESTBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 16, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Emma Smallcomb of Westborough High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Massachusetts Volleyball Player of the Year. Smallcomb is the second Gatorade Massachusetts Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Westborough 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 Smallcomb as Massachusetts' best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Smallcomb joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahlert HS, Iowa), Alisha Glass (2005-06, Leland Public HS, Mich.), Jordan Larson (2004-05, Logan View HS, Neb.) and Foluke Akinradewo (2004-05, St. Thomas HS, Fla.).

The 5-foot-7 senior setter led the Rangers to a 22-4 record and the Division 2 state championship this past season. Smallcomb recorded 407 assists, 89 digs, 84 kills and 40 service aces while posting a kill percentage of .422. The Boston Globe Division 2 Player of the Year, Smallcomb is a three-time Division 2 All-State selection. She concluded her prep volleyball career with 1,451 assists and 601 digs.

Smallcomb has volunteered locally as a counselor at horseback riding camps and as a youth volleyball coach. "Emma's volleyball IQ is arguably the highest of any player I have ever coached," said Roger Anderson, head coach of Westborough High. "When Emma raises her level of intensity, the entire team responds."

Smallcomb has maintained a weighted 3.69 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Sacred Heart University in Connecticut 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.

Smallcomb joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Volleyball Players of the Year Riley James (2016-17, Barnstable High School), Corinne Cox (2015-16 & 2014-15, Notre Dame Academy), Julia Flynn (2013-14, Notre Dame Academy), Cassidy Stankowski (2012-13 & 2011-12, Frontier Regional School), Maura Manley (2010-11, New Bedford High School), Morgan Thatcher (2009-10, Brockton High School), Caitlin Barrett (2008-09, Medfield High School) and Mina Baban (2007-08, Westborough High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Smallcomb 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 <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.

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