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**WEBB SCHOOL OF KNOXVILLE STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TENNESSEE 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 Nicklin Hames of Webb School of Knoxville as its 2017-18 Gatorade Tennessee Volleyball Player of the Year. Hames is the first Gatorade Tennessee Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Webb School of Knoxville.

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 Hames as Tennessee's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Hames 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 6-foot senior setter and right-side hitter led the Spartans to a 35-7 record and their fifth consecutive Division II-A state championship. Hames recorded 385 assists, 225 kills, 218 digs and 46 service aces. A starter for the U.S. Girls Youth National Team, she was a 2017-18 Under Armour First Team All-American and was named MVP of the state tournament for the fourth time. Hames is a five-time All-State honoree and was selected First Team All-American by FloVolleyball.

Hames has volunteered locally on behalf of a retirement home and youth volleyball programs. "Hames makes everything look easy," said Michael Sansone, head coach at Harding Academy. "She serves tough, she plays great defense, she's a great blocker, and she demands the ball on offense. She's just a phenomenal volleyball player."

Hames has maintained a 3.29 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Nebraska 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.

Hames joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Volleyball Players of the Year Logan Eggleston (2016-17, Brentwood High School), Lauren Dorrell (2015-16, Father Ryan High School), Gabby Gray (2014-15, Baylor School), Hunter Thompson (2013-14, Brentwood High School), Kathryn Hutson (2012-13, Ravenwood High School), Alyssa Ivey (2011-12, Ravenwood High School), Madelyn Hutson (2010-11, Ravenwood High School), Megan Devine (2009-10, Dobyns-Bennett High School), Nicole Smith (2008-09, Page High School) and Hannah Shadrick (2007-08, Girls Preparatory School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Hames 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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