

Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729- 3685)

**ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® VERMONT GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 19, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Sadie Stetson of St. Johnsbury Academy as its 2017-18 Gatorade Vermont Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Stetson is the first Gatorade Vermont Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Johnsbury Academy.

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 Stetson as Vermont's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Stetson joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-7 junior guard led the Hilltoppers to a 22-2 record and the Division 1 state championship this past season. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, Stetson averaged 15.6 points, 5.2 rebounds, 4.2 assists and 3.0 steals per game. A First Team All-Metro honoree, she was named to the Vermont Basketball Coaches Association Dream Dozen and, as a sophomore, was selected Miss Basketball by the Burlington Free Press.

Stetson has volunteered locally on behalf of the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life as well as youth sports programs. "Sadie Stetson can beat you in so many ways," said Shawn Montague, head coach at Essex High. "She fills up the stat sheet with points, rebounds, steals, assists, and she plays great defense. She reads plays really well and she's always deflecting the ball."

Stetson has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Two-time winner Stetson joins Gatorade Vermont Girls Basketball Players of the Year Sadie Otley (2015-16, Champlain Valley Union High School), Laurel Jaunich (2014-15, Champlain Valley Union High School), Emily Kinneston (2013-14 & 2012-13, Champlain Valley Union High School), Sarah Illingworth (2011-12, Hartford High School), Kylie Atwood (2010-11, Lake Region Union High School), Allison Gannon (2009-10, Champlain Valley Union High School), Tiffany Johnson (2008-09, Bellows Free Academy), Alyssa Herrington (2007-08, Mt. Anthony Union High School), and Kelli Hier (2006-07, Rice Memorial High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Sadie 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/>.

###