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A.C. REYNOLDS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 6, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Izaiah Vignali of A.C. Reynolds High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade North Carolina Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Vignali is the first Gatorade North Carolina Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from A.C. Reynolds 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 Vignali as North Carolina's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Vignali joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel HS, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick HS, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 5-foot-11, 165-pound senior midfielder scored 23 goals and passed for 14 assists this past season, leading the Rockets (23-3-2) to the Class 3A state championship game. The North Carolina Soccer Coaches Association Player of the Year, Vignali participated in the High School All-American Game. Also an All-American selection by the United Soccer Coaches, he concluded his prep soccer career with 51 goals and 48 assists.

His parents having served as English teachers overseas, Vignali has lived in Spain and India. He has volunteered locally as part of multiple community service initiatives through his church. "Izaiah was extremely dangerous and made a lot of plays," said David Corsbie, head coach of Green Hope High. "He stood out the whole game. Without him, AC Reynolds struggled to get much offensively."

Vignali maintained a weighted 3.82 GPA in the classroom. Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, Vignali inked a financial-aid agreement that paved the way for him to enroll early at the University of North Carolina Asheville. He graduated from high school this past December and attended classes in the spring semester.

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.

Vignali joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Boys Soccer Players of the Year Camden Holbrook (2016-17, Green Hope High School), Nick Hughes (2015-16, Franklin Academy), Clayton Sparks (2014-15, Jacksonville High School), Austin Stamey (2013-14, T.C. Roberson High School), Ade Taiwo (2012-13, Cardinal Gibbons High School), Jonathan Campbell (2011-12, Greensboro Day School), Cooper Vandermaas-Peeler (2010-11, Athens Drive High School), Teddy Mullin (2009-10, Jordan High School), Ben Newnam (2008-09, East Forsyth High School), Watt Williams (2007-08, Broughton High School), and Clint Irwin (2006-07, Charlotte Christian School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Vignali 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 us on Twitter. 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.