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**ST. JAMES ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® KANSAS VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 14, 2011) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Paige Brown of St. James Academy as its 2011-12 Gatorade Kansas Volleyball Player of the Year. Brown is the second Gatorade Kansas Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. James 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 court, distinguishes Brown as Kansas' best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award announced in December, Brown joins an elite alumni association of past state volleyball award winners, including USA Volleyball players Kim Glass (2001-02, Horseshoe HS, Penn.), Kim Willoughby (1998-99, 1999-00, Assumption HS, La.) and Ogonna Nnamani (1999-00, University HS, Ill).

The 5-foot-7 senior setter led the Thunder to a 45-1 record and their fourth straight Class 4A state title this past season. Brown recorded 1,010 assists, 312 digs, 70 blocks, 59 kills and 45 service aces while posting a hitting percentage of .518. The 2011 Class 4A Kansas Volleyball Association Player of the Year and a 2011-12 American Volleyball Coaches Association Under Armour Honorable Mention All-American, she was also the 2011 Evelyn Gates Award recipient for the Kansas City area.

Brown has maintained a 94.8 average in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple community service initiatives in association with her church youth group and recently completed a service mission to New Orleans where she assisted in relief efforts for Hurricane Katrina.

"Paige Brown is an exceptional setter and she did a great job of running their system," said Christie Doile, head coach of rival McPherson High. "If there was a bad pass, she'd find a way to keep them in system. With their great ball control, it allowed her to run any offensive play, making them hard to defend."

Brown has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at North Carolina's Appalachian State University beginning in the fall of 2012.

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 ESPNHS and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, 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.

Brown joins recent Gatorade Kansas Volleyball Players of the Year Hanna Forst (2010-11, St. James Academy), Chelsea Cook (2009-10, Blue Valley North) and Caitlyn Donahue (2008-09, Blue Valley West) among the state's list of former award winners.

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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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