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**RED RIVER HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® NORTH DAKOTA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 14, 2011) — In its 27<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Hadley Steffen of Red River High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade North Dakota Volleyball Player of the Year. Steffen is the first Gatorade North Dakota Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Red River 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 court, distinguishes Steffen as North Dakota's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award announced in December, Steffen 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-9 senior outside hitter led the Roughriders to a 36-0 record and the Class A state title this past season. Steffen recorded 438 kills, 282 digs, 57 blocks and 52 service aces while posting a kill percentage of .433. A two-time First Team All-State selection, she had 26 digs and 19 kills in the five-set state title-clinching win over Bismarck Century.

Steffen has maintained a 3.53 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of her church community, she has volunteered locally as a vacation bible school counselor and on behalf of multiple community service initiatives in association with her school's Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter.

"Hadley Steffen has been a huge part of the success of our program," said Red River head coach Carolyn Olson. "She has been the ideal leader on and off the court."

Steffen remains undecided upon a college destination.

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.

Steffen joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Volleyball Players of the Year Jess Herauf (2010-11, Dickinson High School), Angie Waller (2009-10, Fargo North) and Jessie Gust (2008-09, West Fargo) 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

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