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**BAYSIDE ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ALABAMA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 12, 2012) — In its 28th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Virginia Pittman of Bayside Academy as its 2012-13 Gatorade Alabama Volleyball Player of the Year. Pittman is the second Gatorade Alabama Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Bayside 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 Pittman as Alabama's best high school volleyball player. Pittman joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, 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 6-foot-3 senior middle led the Admirals (65-2) to an 11th consecutive state championship this past season. A three-time Mobile Press-Register Super 12 Team selection, Pittman amassed 601 kills while compiling a .413 hitting percentage. She also recorded 232 digs, 140 service aces and 135 blocks. Pittman collected 16 kills, five blocks, four digs and three service aces in a Class 3A state title sweep of Cottage Hill Christian Academy, capturing tournament Co-Most Valuable Player honors in the process.

Also a basketball standout, Pittman has maintained a weighted 4.06 weighted GPA in the classroom and serves in her school's student government. Also a prominent member of her school's Key Club International and National Honor Society chapters, she has volunteered on behalf of Distinguished Young Women, the Capstone Leadership Academy, the Alabama Girls State civics-awareness program and her church's youth group.

"Virginia Pittman is certainly an outstanding player," said Jennifer Newton, head coach of rival Cottage Hill Christian Academy. "We played against Bayside six times this past year alone, and in every match she was a dominant player. She is an obvious leader on their team. Also, she has always displayed exemplary sportsmanship. She is very outgoing and friendly to my players and other coaches.

Pittman remains undecided upon a collegiate 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 the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), 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.

Pittman joins recent Gatorade Alabama Volleyball Players of the Year Cati Leak (2011-12 & 2010-11, Guntersville High School), Chelsea Wintzinger (2009-10, Huntsville), Catherine Rebarchak (2008-09, Huntsville) and MacKenzie Wilson (2007-08, Grissom) 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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