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**EDEN PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® MINNESOTA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 12, 2012) — In its 28<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Sarah Wilhite of Eden Prairie High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Minnesota Volleyball Player of the Year. Wilhite is the first Gatorade Minnesota Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Eden Prairie 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 Wilhite as Minnesota's best high school volleyball player. Wilhite 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-1 senior outside hitter recorded 667 kills, 230 digs, 66 blocks and 33 service aces this past season while posting a kill percentage of .457 and leading the Eagles (28-5) to the Class AAA state final. Also the 2011-12 Gatorade Minnesota Volleyball Player of the Year, Wilhite is a 2012-13 American Volleyball Coaches Association Under Armour First Team All-American.

Wilhite has maintained a 3.90 GPA in the classroom. An accomplished vocalist with her school's treble choir and women's concert chorale, she has volunteered locally as a youth volleyball coach and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with the National Honor Society.

"Sarah Wilhite is one of the finest players I have ever coached," said Eden Prairie head coach Chad Becker. "She is a true team leader and her work ethic is unmatched."

Wilhite has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on an athletic scholarship at the University of Minnesota beginning in the fall of 2013.

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.

Wilhite joins Gatorade Minnesota Volleyball Players of the Year Kellie McNeil (2010-11, Lakeville North High School), Ashley Wittman (2009-10 & 2008-09, Shakopee), and Jennifer Lopez (2007-08, DGF) 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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