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**FARGO NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NORTH DAKOTA 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 Kira Larson of Fargo North High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade North Dakota Volleyball Player of the Year. Larson is the third Gatorade North Dakota Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Fargo North 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 Larson as North Dakota's best high school volleyball player. Larson 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 blocker recorded 558 kills, 394 digs, 137 blocks and 108 service aces this past season while posting a kill percentage of .457 and leading the Spartans (28-5) to the Class A conference semifinals. A two-time First Team All-State selection, she is also a 2012-13 American Volleyball Coaches Association Under Armour First Team All-American.

Larson has maintained a 3.63 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a volleyball camp counselor, on behalf of the Salvation Army and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with her church youth group.

"Kira Larson is most definitely one of the best players we have seen in our state in recent years," said Jessica Nichols, head coach at Bismarck High. "Her offense is her strong point. She is very tall and jumps extremely well and can get around almost any block."

Larson has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on an athletic scholarship at the University of Nebraska 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.

Larson joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Volleyball Players of the Year Hadley Steffen (2011-12, Red River High School), Jess Herauf (2010-11, Dickinson High School), Angie Waller (2009-10, Fargo North), Jessie Gust (2008-09, Fargo North) and Danielle Luetzen (2007-08, Minot) 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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