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**Contact: Ashley Ginascol (312-729-3622)**

**WEST ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® OREGON 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 Tani Stephens of West Albany High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Oregon Volleyball Player of the Year. Stephens is the first Gatorade Oregon Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from West Albany 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 Stephens as Oregon's best high school volleyball player. Stephens 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 5-foot-7 senior outside hitter and setter led the Bulldogs to a 31-1 record and the Class 5A state title this past season. Stephens recorded 376 kills, 244 digs, 104 assists, 68 service aces and 46 blocks while posting a hitting percentage of .388 and a kill percentage of .514. The 2012 Class 5A Player of the Year, Stephens is a three-time Mid-Willamette Conference Player of the Year and a two-time Class 5A First Team All-State selection. She concluded her prep volleyball career with 623 kills, 528 digs and 158 service aces.

Stephens has maintained a 3.74 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally at Christmas Storybook Land, as a peer math tutor and as a youth gymnastics coach.

"Tani Stephens does everything well on the court," said Emily Gustafson, head coach of Sherwood High. "She has an amazingly tough serve, is one of her team's primary passers and is a dominant hitter. She is also a very smart player. She reads the ball very well and can place the ball anywhere on the court."

Stephens has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on an athletic scholarship at Washington State University beginning next fall.

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.

Stephens joins recent Gatorade Oregon Volleyball Players of the Year Martenne Bettendorf (2011-12, Central Catholic High School), Elizabeth Brenner (2010-11 & 2009-10, Jesuit High School), Garyn Schlatter (2008-09, Jesuit) and Kim Hill (2007-08, Portland Christian) 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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