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**VERITAS PREPARATORY ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® ARIZONA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 12, 2013) — In its 29<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 Sponcil of Veritas Preparatory Academy as its 2013-14 Gatorade Arizona Volleyball Player of the Year. Sponcil is the first Gatorade Arizona Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Veritas Preparatory 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 Sponcil as Arizona's best high school volleyball player. Sponcil 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-10 junior setter and outside hitter recorded 689 kills, 533 digs, 226 assists, 53 service aces and 52 blocks while posting a kill percentage of .600 and leading the Falcons (29-12) to the Division IV state final this past season. The state's returning Gatorade Volleyball Player of the Year, Sponcil delivered 123 kills in four state tournament matches and was selected as the 2013 Arizona Republic Small School Player of the Year.

Sponcil has maintained a 3.12 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a peer mentor and as a youth volleyball coach.

"Sarah Sponcil always strives to be the best athlete in the gym," said Veritas Prep head coach Wes Goodwin. "Her statistics speak for themselves but that's just a fraction of her court presence. Her knowledge of the game is like that of an experienced college player. Her combination of athleticism, intelligence and mental toughness not only brings out the best in her teammates, it also brings out the best in her opponents."

Sponcil has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on an athletic scholarship at Loyola Marymount University beginning in the fall of 2014.

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.

Two-time winner Sponcil joins Gatorade Arizona Volleyball Players of the Year Bianca Arellano (2011-12, Xavier College Prep.), Madison Kingdon (2010-11, Sunnyslope High School), Stephanie Preach (2009-10 & 2008-09, Xavier College Prep.), and Cat Highmark (2007-08, Chaparral) 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 [www.gatorade.com/poy](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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