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**XAVERIAN BROTHERS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MASSACHUSETTS FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 4, 2014) — In its 30th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Joe Gaziano of Xaverian Brothers High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Massachusetts Football Player of the Year. Gaziano is the second Gatorade Massachusetts Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Xaverian Brothers 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 Gaziano as Massachusetts's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Gaziano joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Wes Welker (1999-00, Heritage Hall HS, Okla.), Terrell Suggs (1999-00, Hamilton HS, Ariz.), Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.) and Jerome Bettis (1989-90, Mackenzie HS, Mich.).

The 6-foot-4, 245-pound senior defensive end and tight end has led the Hawks to an 11-0 record and a berth in the Division 1 Super Bowl against Everett High, scheduled for Dec. 6. At the time of his selection, Gaziano had recorded 75 tackles, including 10 for a loss, along with eight sacks and two forced fumbles for a defense surrendering just 8.2 points per game. A 2015 Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl game invitee, he averaged 41.3 yards per punt and hauled in four passes for 97 yards and a touchdown through 11 games.

Gaziano has maintained a weighted 3.85 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as part of multiple fundraisers to benefit cancer research in honor of his sister, Andrea, who passed away from leukemia in 2006 at the age of 14. He has also donated his time at Xaverian as a peer mentor.

"Joe Gaziano is a beast of a player," said Alex Campea, head coach of Catholic Memorial High. "He's big, strong and athletic. He is an outstanding blocker offensively and an imposing figure on the defensive side of the ball."

Gaziano has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at Northwestern University in the fall of 2015.

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.

Gaziano joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Football Players of the Year Neil O'Connor (2013-14, Leominster High School), Alex Moore (2012-13, St. John's Preparatory School), Jonathan DiBiaso (2011-12, Everett High School), Matt Costello (2010-11, Everett High School), Nick LaSpada (2009-10, Billerica Memorial), Matt Grimard (2008-09, Dracut High School) and Matt Bellomo (2007-08, Holliston) 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.

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