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**LANSING CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® MICHIGAN FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 3, 2015) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Tony Poljan of Lansing Catholic High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Michigan Football Player of the Year. Poljan is the second Gatorade Michigan Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Lansing Catholic 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 Poljan as Michigan's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Poljan 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-7, 230-pound senior quarterback threw for 1,907 yards and 15 touchdowns on 128-of-218 passing this past season, leading the Cougars (11-2) to the Division 5 state semifinals. The returning Offensive Player of the Year as named by the Lansing State Journal, Poljan also rushed for 1,232 yards and 25 touchdowns on 179 carries in 13 games. As a linebacker, he collected 74 tackles (10 for losses), four forced fumbles, two sacks and an interception in 2015. A 2014 Division 5 First Team All-State selection, his 53 total touchdowns as a junior set a state single-season record.

Also a basketball standout, Poljan has maintained a 3.44 GPA in the classroom and has served as president of both Lansing Catholic's senior class and his school's student fundraising organization. In addition to donating his time as a youth football and basketball instructor, he has volunteered on behalf of his church, the 4-H youth development program and the National Honor Society.

"He's an extremely skilled player on both sides of the football," said Bret Shrader, head coach of rival Fowlerville. "He has the size and strength to play different positions on offense and defense at the next level. Even more impressive: This (was) only his third year as a quarterback. His stats back up his skill set."

Poljan has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at the University of Minnesota in the fall of 2016.

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.

Poljan joins recent Gatorade Michigan Football Players of the Year Alex Malzone (2014-15, Brother Rice High School), Travis Smith (2013-14, Ithaca High School), Mark Chapman (2012-13, Port Huron High School), Cooper Rush (2011-12, Lansing Catholic High School), Valdez Showers (2010-11, Madison High School), Jason Fracassa (2009-10, Stevenson High School), Joe Glendening (2008-09, East Grand Rapids High School) and Mike Martin (2007-08, Detroit Catholic Central High School) 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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