

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jason Belenke (312-729-3631)

**ST. JAMES ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® KANSAS VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 8, 2015) — In its 31st year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Jenna Gray of St. James Academy as its 2015-16 Gatorade Kansas Volleyball Player of the Year. Gray is the third Gatorade Kansas Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. James 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 Gray as Kansas's best high school volleyball player. Gray 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-1 senior setter led the Thunder to a 43-1 record and the Class 5A state title this past season. Gray distributed 778 assists, slammed 289 kills and recorded 267 digs while posting a kill percentage of .619. A four-time First Team All-State selection and a 2015 Under Armour First Team All-American as named by the American Volleyball Coaches Association, she was the Kansas Volleyball Association's 2015 Class 5A Co-Player of the Year and ranks as the nation's No. 11 recruit as rated by PrepVolleyball.com.

Gray has maintained a 98.4 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics, the Ronald McDonald House and has participated in a service-mission trip to Alabama to help repair damaged homes.

"Jenna Gray is an amazing athlete," said Laura Curry, head coach at Shawnee Heights High. "She is an all-around player and leads her team by example along with positive leadership. I have seen a lot of volleyball and there are very few players that perform at this level with as much class that she does."

Gray has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Stanford University 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.

Gray joins recent Gatorade Kansas Volleyball Players of the Year Carlyle Nusbaum (2014-15, Saint Thomas Aquinas High School), Kali Eaken (2013-14, Bishop Miege High School), Cassie Wait (2012-13, Gardner-Edgerton High School), Paige Brown (2011-12, St. James Academy), Hanna Forst (2010-11, St. James Academy), Chelsea Cook (2009-10, Blue Valley North High School), Caitlyn Donahue (2008-09, Blue Valley West High School) and Kathleen Ludwig (2007-08, Bishop Miege 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.

###