

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jason Belenke (312-729-3631)

**EDEN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEW YORK 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 Sam Burgio of Eden High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade New York Volleyball Player of the Year. Burgio is the third Gatorade New York Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Eden 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 Burgio as New York's best high school volleyball player. Burgio 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 outside hitter led the Raiders to a 37-8-1 record and the Class C state championship this past season, their state-record seventh title in a row. Burgio recorded 646 kills, 510 digs, 140 service aces and 79 blocks. A First Team All-State selection each of the past two seasons, she's also a two-time member of the All-State Tournament Team.

Burgio has maintained an A average in the classroom. Also a talented singer, she has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and youth sports programs.

"Burgio is one of the best outside hitters I've seen play the game," said Renee Smith, head coach at Tonawanda High. "Her biggest strength is her power and control over the ball. She's smart and she always knows where the ball is supposed to go."

Burgio will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Burgio joins recent Gatorade New York Volleyball Players of the Year Leah Meyer (2014-15, St. Mary's High School), Luisa Schirmer (2013-14 & 2012-13, Pittsford Sutherland High School), Melissa Rigo (2011-12, Elwood-John H. Glenn High School), Heather Feldman (2010-11, Eden High School), Mary Cushman (2009-10 & 2008-09, West Irondequoit High School), and Erin Little (2007-08, Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake 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.

###