

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: John Manzo (312-729- 3656)

**OAKTON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 17, 2016) — 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 Tess Sapone of Oakton High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Virginia Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Sapone is the first Gatorade Virginia Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Oakton 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 Sapone as Virginia's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Sapone joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-7 senior midfielder has led the Cougars to a 12-1 record and a berth in the Conference 5 Tournament semifinals, scheduled for May 18. Sapone has scored 16 goals and passed for three assists. A 2016 Group 6A First Team All-State selection, she was a 2015 Washington Post Second Team All-Met honoree.

Sapone has maintained a weighted 3.67 GPA in the classroom. A volunteer athletic trainer at Oakton High, she has donated her time locally with a gingerbread and cupcake decorating workshop to benefit Cakes Against Cancer in addition to serving as a youth soccer coach.

"Tess Sapone is a very dominant player who requires your attention throughout the whole match," said Rob Bouchard, head coach of McLean High. "The attention she draws allows other players an opportunity to score. She is a game-changer on the field."

Sapone has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at the University of Florida beginning this 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.

Sapone joins recent Gatorade Virginia Girls Soccer Players of the Year Kristina Diana (2014-15, South County High School), Katie Cousins (2013-14, Jefferson Forest High School), Brittany Basinger (2012-13, Woodgrove High School), Anna McClung (2011-12 & 2010-11, Gate City High School), Jenna Richmond (2009-10 & 2008-09, Centreville High School), Brook Chang (2007-08, Bishop O'Connell High School), and Liz Carroll (2006-07, Bishop O'Connell 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.

###