

Contact: John Manzo (312-729-3622)

**POLY PREP COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEW YORK BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 24, 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 Daniel Bakst of Poly Prep Country Day School as its 2015-16 Gatorade New York Baseball Player of the Year. Bakst is the first Gatorade New York Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Poly Prep Country Day 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 Bakst as New York's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Bakst joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Roy Halladay (1994-95, Arvada West HS, Colo.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman HS, Tenn.), Chipper Jones (1989-90, Bolles School, Fla.), Derek Lee (1992-93, El Camino HS, Calif.) and Jon Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Prep, Wash.).

The 6-foot-2, 185-pound senior shortstop and third baseman had led the Blue Devils to a 21-5 record at the time of his selection. Bakst owned a .447 batting average with 32 RBI, 33 runs scored and a .569 on-base percentage through 26 games. A member of the USA Baseball 18U National Team, he was an All-Conference and All-City selection as a junior and was a Rawlings/Perfect Game Second Team Preseason All-American.

Bakst has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has served as a mentor for younger athletes and has volunteered locally on behalf of the Harlem Baseball Hitting Academy and God's Love We Deliver, which provides meals for the needy.

"Bakst is a fantastic baseball player," said Doug McDonald, head coach at Riverside Country School. "He's a good infielder with an above average arm, great range and a very good bat. He's hit in the middle of that lineup since he was a freshman and he carries himself with confidence on the field."

Bakst has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Stanford University 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.

Bakst joins recent Gatorade New York Baseball Players of the Year Garrett Whitley (2014-15, Niskayuna High School), Scott Blewett (2013-14, C.W. Baker High School), Mark Armstrong (2012-13, Clarence High School), Alex Robinson (2011-12, Holy Trinity High School), Jonathan de Marte (2010-11 & 2009-10, Lakeland High School), Marcus Stroman (2008-09, Patchogue-Medford High School), Philip Pohl (2007-08, Cooperstown High School), and Brian Dupra (2006-07, Greece Athena 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.

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