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**FAYETTEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ARKANSAS FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 12, 2016) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Taylor Powell of Fayetteville High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Arkansas Football Player of the Year. Powell is the third Gatorade Arkansas Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Fayetteville 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 Powell as Arkansas' best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in December, Collins joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.), Greg Olsen (2002-03, Wayne Hills HS, N.J.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06 Highland Park HS, Texas), Harrison Smith (2006-07 Knoxville Catholic High School, Tenn.), Latavius Murray (2007-08, Onondaga HS, N.Y.), Brock Osweiler (2008-09, Flathead High School, Mont.) and Leonard Fournette (2012-13, 2014-15, St. Augustine HS, La.)

The 6-foot-1, 205-pound senior quarterback passed for 3,473 yards and 44 touchdowns this past season, leading the Bulldogs to a 12-1 record and their second consecutive Class 7A state championship. Powell completed 237 of 347 passes and was intercepted just six times. The All-Arkansas Preps Offensive Player of the Year as a junior, he finished his prep career with a Class 7A record 113 touchdown passes.

Powell has maintained a 3.86 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of his church community, he has volunteered locally serving meals to the needy and coaching youth football players.

"Taylor Powell is a very impressive football player," said Zak Clark, head coach at Springdale High. "He's very smooth, very polished and he gets the ball out of his hands as quickly as anyone I've seen. He's very accurate too, and shows tremendous command and poise."

Powell has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at Wake Forest University beginning in the fall of 2017.

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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Powell joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Football Players of the Year McTelvin Agim (2015-16, Hope High School), Ty Storey (2014-15 & 2013-14, Charleston High School), Austin Allen (2012-13, Fayetteville High School), Fredi Knighten (2011-12, Pulaski Academy), Kiehl Frazier (2010-11, Shiloh Christian School), and Michael Dyer (2009-10, Little Rock Christian Academy) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Powell will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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.