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**BISHOP MIEGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE KANSAS 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 Carter Putz of Bishop Miege High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Kansas Football Player of the Year. Putz is the second Gatorade Kansas Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Bishop Miege 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 Putz as Kansas' 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 5-foot-11, 180-pound junior quarterback led the Stags to a 12-1 record and the Class 4A, Division I state championship this past season. Putz completed 167-of-234 passes for 3,264 yards and 50 touchdowns against just three interceptions. He tossed 17 touchdown passes in four postseason games, including five in a 53-21 win over Buhler High in the state final. A First Team All-State selection as a sophomore, Putz concluded his junior year with 6,451 passing yards and 86 touchdowns in his prep career.

Putz has maintained a weighted 3.95 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a youth football and baseball coach as well as with multiple community-service initiatives through his church.

"In our offense, we put a lot of pressure on our quarterback," said Bishop Miege head coach Jon Holmes. "He is required to make checks and reads every play. Carter's ability to keep plays alive sets him apart from other QBs we've had here."

Putz has made a verbal commitment to play baseball on an athletic scholarship at the University of Notre Dame beginning in the fall of 2018.

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.

Putz joins recent Gatorade Kansas Football Players of the Year Christian Jegen (2015-16, Mill Valley High School), Denzel Goolsby (2014-15, Bishop Carroll Catholic High School), Joe Dineen (2013-14, Free State High School), Tanner Wood (2012-13, Conway Springs High School), Montell Cozart (2011-12, Bishop Miege High School), Bubba Starling (2010-11, Gardner Edgerton High School), and Blake Bell (2009-10, Bishop Carroll Catholic High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Putz 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.