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**CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE OHIO 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 Michael Warren of Central Catholic High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Ohio Football Player of the Year. Warren is the first Gatorade Ohio Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Central Catholic 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 Warren as Ohio's 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-9, 210-pound senior running back rushed for 2,740 yards and 42 touchdowns on 306 carries this past season, leading the Fighting Irish (13-1) to the Division III state semifinals. Warren also caught 11 passes for 151 yards and three scores and, as a part-time defensive back, he contributed 12 tackles and two interceptions. The Ohio Associated Press Mr. Football winner, he concluded his prep football career with 7,619 yards and 102 touchdowns rushing, both of which rank amongst the top-10 in state history.

Warren has maintained a B average in the classroom and represents one of the state's top academic candidates in meeting the Gatorade award's broad criteria. He has volunteered locally with his school's Student Service program and as a youth football coach.

"Michael is so dangerous because he can run away and over you," said Doug Pearson, head coach of St. John's Jesuit High. "He's built like a truck and has sprinter's speed."

Warren has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at the University of Toledo 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.

Warren joins recent Gatorade Ohio Football Players of the Year Tommy Kraemer (2015-16, Elder High School), Joe Burrow (2014-15 & 2013-14, Athens High School), Mitch Trubisky (2012-13, Mentor High School), Maty Mauk (2011-12 & 2010-11, Kenton High School), and Jordan Hicks (2009-10, Lakota West High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Warren 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.