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**LAKE BRADDOCK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 Lamont Atkins of Lake Braddock High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Virginia Football Player of the Year. Atkins is the first Gatorade Virginia Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Lake Braddock 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 Atkins as Virginia'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-11, 200-pound senior running back and linebacker rushed for 1,886 yards and 31 touchdowns on 156 carries this past season, leading the Bruins to the Class 6A quarterfinals. Atkins also made 61 tackles on defense, seven for loss. He was named the All-Conference 7 Offensive and Defensive Player of the Year.

Atkins has maintained a 3.22 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of his church's youth ministry, he has volunteered locally on behalf of a food bank.

"Lamont Atkins is just a tremendous football player," said Scott Vossler, head coach at Robinson Secondary School. "He's physical, tough and explosive. He's a patient runner who can fit through cracks, and once he gets through, he doesn't get caught."

Atkins has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at the University of Virginia 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.

Atkins joins recent Gatorade Virginia Football Players of the Year Wayne Davis (2015-16, Lake Taylor High School), Noah Reimers (2014-15, Tuscarora High School), Andrew Brown (2013-14, Oscar Smith High School), Jonathan Allen (2012-13, Stone Bridge High School), Alex Carter (2011-12, Briar Woods High School), Demetrious Nicholson (2010-11, Bayside High School), and Phillip Sims (2009-10, Oscar Smith High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Atkins 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.