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**BAYSIDE ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ALABAMA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 17, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Lauren Chastang of Bayside Academy as its 2016-17 Gatorade Alabama Volleyball Player of the Year. Chastang is the third Gatorade Alabama Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Bayside Academy.

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 Chastang as Alabama's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Chastang joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahlerlert HS, Iowa), Alisha Glass (2005-06, Leland Public HS, Mich.), Jordan Larson (2004-05, Logan View HS, Neb.) and Foluke Akinradewo (2004-05, St. Thomas HS, Fla.).

The 6-foot senior outside hitter led the Admirals to a 57-5 record and the Class 3A state championship this past season. Chastang recorded 664 kills, 475 digs, 106 blocks and 72 service aces. The AL.com Player of the Year, she is also a MaxPreps Small School All-American and a two-time MVP of the state tournament.

A member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Chastang has volunteered locally on behalf of children with special needs. "She's by far the best player every time she takes the floor," said Kate Wood, head coach at McGill-Toolen High. "She's physically imposing, with a really heavy arm, and she has a lot of different shots."

Chastang has maintained a 3.35 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Kennesaw State 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 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.

Chastang joins recent Gatorade Alabama Volleyball Players of the Year Sara Carr (2015-16 & 2014-15, Mountain Brook High School), Leah Lawrence (2013-14, Covenant Christian Academy), Virginia Pittman (2012-13, Bayside Academy), Cati Leak (2011-12 & 2010-11, Guntersville High School), Chelsea Wintzinger (2009-10, Huntsville), Catherine Rebarchak (2008-09, St. Paul's Episcopal School) and MacKenzie Wilson (2007-08, Grissom High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Chastang 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.