

**Contact: John Manzo (312-729-3656)**

**SANTA FE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE CALIFORNIA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 17, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Lexi Sun of Santa Fe Christian School as its 2016-17 Gatorade California Volleyball Player of the Year. Sun is the first Gatorade California Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Santa Fe Christian 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 Sun as California'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, Sun joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahlert 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-2 senior outside hitter amassed 630 kills, 288 digs, 60 blocks and 45 service aces this past season, leading the Eagles (32-8) to the Open Division semifinals. A 2016-17 Under Armour First Team All-American, Sun is a member of the U.S. Women's Junior National team. She was named the ALL-USA Player of the Year by USA TODAY and is ranked as the No. 1 recruit nationally in the Class of 2017 by PrepVolleyball.com.

A devoted member of her church community, Sun has volunteered locally on behalf of a homeless shelter and youth volleyball camps, and has participated in a service-mission trip to build a home for a family in Mexico. "Lexi Sun is just special," said Peter Ogle, head coach at La Jolla Country Day School. "She's a great player, a great kid and a great teammate. I can't imagine there is a more dynamic player in the state or the country."

Sun has maintained a 3.83 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Texas 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.

Sun joins recent Gatorade California Volleyball Players of the Year Kathryn Plummer (2015-16, Aliso Niguel High School), Yaasmeen Bedart-Ghani (2014-15, Redondo Union High School), Taylor Nelson (2013-14, Granite Bay High School), Skylar Dykstra (2012-13, Redondo Union High School), Emily Sklar (2011-12, Presentation High School), Krista Vansant (2010-11, Redlands East Valley High School), Rachel Williams (2009-10, Archbishop Mitty High School), Lauren Corp (2008-09, Orange Lutheran High School) and Tarah Murrey (2007-08, Saint Mary's High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Sun 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

###