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**PRINCESS ANNE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 Abby Bottomley of Princess Anne High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Virginia Volleyball Player of the Year. Bottomley is the first Gatorade Virginia Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Princess Anne 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 Bottomley as Virginia'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, Bottomley 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 5-foot-6 senior outside hitter and defensive specialist led the Cavaliers to a 31-2 record and the Group 5A state championship this past season. Bottomley tallied 231 kills, 292 digs and 102 service aces while posting a kill percentage of .430. The South Regional Player of the Year and a two-time First Team All-State selection, she concluded her prep volleyball career with 940 digs, 769 kills and 256 service aces.

A self-taught guitarist and an avid jewelry maker, Bottomley has volunteered locally with the Cerebral Palsy Association and the Special Olympics. She has also donated her time at the elementary school where her mother works. "Abby is an absolute beast on the court" said Nicole Kessner, head coach of Blacksburg High. "The fact she swings on the outside with such a small stature, that is completely amazing to me."

Bottomley has maintained a weighted 4.17 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at High Point 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.

Bottomley joins recent Gatorade Virginia Volleyball Players of the Year Holly Carlton (2015-16, Potomac Falls High School), Ally Ford (2014-15, Flint Hill School), Alex Andrejev (2013-14, Langley High School), Hailey Brooks (2012-13, Altee High School), Breanna Atkinson (2011-12, The Madeira School), Tori Janowski (2010-11, Flint Hill School), Juliane Hanna (2009-10, Loudoun County High School), Kristin Carpenter (2008-09, Hanover High School) and Alyssa Lang (2007-08, Deep Run High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Bottomley 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).

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