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## **STILLWATER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE OKLAHOMA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 30, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Ryan Vilade of Stillwater High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Oklahoma Baseball Player of the Year. Vilade is the fourth Gatorade Oklahoma Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Stillwater 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 Vilade as Oklahoma's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Vilade joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo High School, Mich.), Jon Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Preparatory School, Wash.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman High School, Tenn.), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas), Rick Porcello (2006-2007, Seaton Hall Preparatory School, N.J.) and Kris Bryant (2009-10, Bonanza High School, Nev.).

The 6-foot-2, 195-pound senior shortstop batted .410 with seven home runs and 28 RBI this past season, leading the Pioneers (27-10) to the Class 6A regional championship game. Ranked as the nation's No. 34 recruit in the Class of 2017 by Perfect Game, Vilade won the 2016 home run derby at the Under Armour All-American Game at Wrigley Field last summer and helped the USA Baseball 18U National Team win a gold medal while playing in Mexico. He compiled a .778 slugging percentage in his final prep campaign.

A member of the National Honor Society, Vilade has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics, Frisco Family Services and as a youth baseball coach. "Ryan Vilade knows the game inside and out and how to play it the right way," said Glenn Cecchini, head coach of the USA Baseball 18U National Team. "He is an outstanding talented player and a gamer with a blue-collar work ethic. He personifies what championship teams are made of."

Vilade has maintained a 3.94 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Oklahoma State University this fall, but is projected as an early round selection in June's Major League Baseball draft.

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.

Vilade joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Baseball Players of the Year Cacy Harper (2015-16, Berryhill High School), Kyle Tyler (2014-15, Westmoore High School), Gavin LaValley (2013-14, Carl Albert High School), Austin O'Brien (2012-13, Owasso High School), Ty Hensley (2011-12, Edmond Santa Fe High School), Dylan Bundy (2010-11, 2009-10 & 2008-09, Owasso High School), Bobby Bundy (2007-08, Sperry High School), and Peter Kozma (2006-07, Owasso High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Ryan 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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