

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729-3651)

BANGOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MAINE BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 12, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Carson Atherley of Bangor High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Maine Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Atherley is the second Gatorade Maine Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Bangor 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 Atherley as Maine's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Atherley joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel HS, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick HS, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 6-foot, 165-pound senior midfielder scored 18 goals and passed for seven assists this past season, leading the Rams (16-1-1) to the Class A state championship. An All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, Atherley is a four-time All-State honoree. He was also named the Class A Player of the Year and the Kennebec Valley Athletic Conference Player of the Year.

A devoted member of his church youth group and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Atherley has served as a tutor in his school and has volunteered locally on behalf of youth soccer programs. "Carson Atherley is the best player I've ever coached against," said Josh Stevens, head coach at Hampden Academy. "He has the ability to affect the game from the opening whistle until the final one. He's just a dynamic soccer player with next-level potential."

Atherley has maintained a 3.88 GPA in the classroom. He will attend Brown University this fall, where he will play soccer.

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.

Atherley joins recent Gatorade Maine Boys Soccer Players of the Year Abdi Shariff-Hassan (2015-16, Lewiston High School), Stephen Ochan (2014-15, Deering High School), Wyatt Omsberg (2013-14, Scarborough High School), Matt Saunders (2012-13, Lawrence High School), Robby Lentine (2011-12, Windham High School), Fazal Nabi (2010-11, Portland High School), Gabe Hoffman-Johnson (2009-10 & 2008-09, Falmouth High School), Oliver Blum (2007-08, Greely High School), and Jordan Hale (2006-07, Falmouth High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Carson 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 us on Twitter. 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.

###