FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729-3651)

TRAVERSE CITY WEST SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MICHIGAN 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 Dalton Michael of Traverse City West Senior High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Michigan Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Michael is the second Gatorade Michigan Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Traverse City West Senior 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 Michael as Michigan'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, Michael 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, 160-pound senior forward scored 29 goals and passed for eight assists this past season, leading the Titans (18-3-2) to the Division I, Regional 1 tournament final. The Michigan High School Soccer Coaches Association's Mr. Soccer winner, Michael is a two-time captain of the Traverse City Record Eagle Dream Team. He concluded his prep soccer career with 72 goals and 26 assists.

A member of a Traverse City West High book club, which raises money to buy books for the school, Michael has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach. "Dalton is a tenacious forward with size, strength and speed who is a great finisher," said Tim Storch, head coach of Alpena High. "He is a go-to-goal player and he does it well."

Michael has maintained a 3.78 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Western Michigan University beginning 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.

Michael joins recent Gatorade Michigan Boys Soccer Players of the Year Anthony Bowie (2015-16, Forest Hills Central High School), DeJuan Jones (2014-15, East Lansing High School), Alec Lasinski (2013-14, Skyline High School), Dewey Lewis (2012-13, Rockford High School), Zach Carroll (2011-12, Grand Blanc High School), Dzenan Catic (2010-11, East Kentwood High School), Soony Saad (2009-10, Dearborn High School), Kevin Cope (2008-09, Salem High School), and Casey Townsend (2007-08 & 2006-07, Traverse City West Senior High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Dalton 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.

###