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**KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS-KAPALMA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE
HAWAII VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 16, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Lexis Akeo of Kamehameha Schools-Kapalma High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Hawaii Volleyball Player of the Year. Akeo is the fourth Gatorade Hawaii Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Kamehameha Schools-Kapalma 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 Akeo as Hawaii'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, Akeo 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-9 junior setter led the Warriors to a 26-5 record and the Division I state championship this past season. Akeo recorded 841 assists, 173 digs, 54 kills and 22 blocks while posting a kill percentage of .367. The Division I state tournament MVP and a First Team All-State selection, she recorded 104 assists in three postseason matches, all of them straight-set, 3-0 Kamehameha victories.

Akeo has volunteered locally on behalf of her family-run Pilikoko Baseball Clinic/Canned Food Drive and this year she helped organize the first Pilikoko Volleyball Clinic/Canned Food Drive. She has also donated her time to community beautification projects. "Lexis has matured into a very skilled and cerebral setter," said Chris Blake, head coach of Kamehameha School. "She understands her role to put our attackers in the best spots for success."

Akeo has maintained a 3.72 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Pittsburgh beginning in the fall of 2019.

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.

Akeo joins recent Gatorade Hawaii Volleyball Players of the Year Elena Oglivie (2016-17, Iolani School), Bailey Choy (2015-16, Iolani School), McKenna Granato (2014-15, Punahou School), Alohi Robins-Hardy (2013-14, Kamehameha Schools-Kapalama High School), Carly Kan (2012-13, Punahou School), Tayler Higgins (2011-12, Punahou School), Misty Ma'a (2010-11, Kamehameha Schools-Kapalama High School), Sarah Palmer (2009-10 & 2008-09, Hawaii Baptist Academy), and Kanani Herring (2007-08, Kamehameha Schools-Kapalama High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Akeo 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 <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.

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