

Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729-3685)

BLUE VALLEY SOUTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE KANSAS GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 18, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Gracely Briley of Blue Valley Southwest High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade Kansas Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Briley is the first Gatorade Kansas Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Blue Valley Southwest 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 Briley as Kansas's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Briley 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 (2004-05, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-9 junior midfielder, forward and defender led the Timberwolves to a 19-0-1 record and a second straight Class 5A state championship this past season. Briley scored 12 goals and passed for one of her 10 assists in the team's 2-0 win over Mill Valley High in the state title game. A two-time First Team All-State selection, she concluded her junior year with 41 goals and 22 assists in her prep soccer career.

Briley has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach, and she has also donated her time creating and organizing a fundraising campaign to purchase mosquito nets for families in Africa. "Briley is a stud," said Nate Huppe, head coach of Bishop Miege High. "She's a game-changer and one who can simply dominate a game without scoring. She did everything for BVSU in helping them go unbeaten."

Briley has maintained a weighted 4.11 GPA in the classroom. Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, Briley intends to ink a financial-aid agreement that paves the way for her to enroll early at Kansas University. She will graduate from high school this December and begin collegiate classes in the spring semester.

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.

Two-time winner Briley joins Gatorade Kansas Girls Soccer Players of the Year Maycee Bell (2015-16, Trinity Academy), Parker Roberts (2014-15 & 2013-14, Blue Valley North High School), Haley Hanson (2012-13, Olathe East High School), Lexi Aiman (2011-12, Blue Valley West High School), Hannah Chadick (2010-11, Blue Valley Northwest High School), Ashley Catrell (2009-10, Blue Valley West High School), Jordan Jackson (2008-09 & 2007-08, Blue Valley West High School), and Geneva Magness (2006-07, St. Thomas Aquinas High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Briley 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.

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