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**HALIFAX COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 Andrew Abbott of Halifax County High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Virginia Baseball Player of the Year. Abbott is the first Gatorade Virginia Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Halifax County 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 Abbott as Virginia's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Abbott 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, 162-pound senior left-handed pitcher and outfielder had led the Comets to a 19-2 record at the time of his selection. Abbott owned an 8-0 record on the mound with one save and a 0.27 earned run average in 51.2 innings pitched, striking out 123 batters and walking only three through 21 games. At the plate, Abbott owned a .483 batting average with four doubles, three triples, a .577 on-base percentage and a .707 slugging percentage. A Perfect Game Honorable Mention Preseason All-American selection, he is a two-time First Team All-State honoree.

Abbott has volunteered locally as a youth baseball and swim coach. "I feel pretty good about our chances when we play the Comets if I don't see Andrew Abbott on the mound," said Eric Renegar, head coach of Patrick County High. "He completely changes their team, propelling them to a level of competition I have not seen in high school baseball."

Abbott has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Virginia 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.

Abbott joins recent Gatorade Virginia Baseball Players of the Year Khalil Lee (2015-16, Flint Hill School), Nic Enright (2014-15, The Steward School), J.B. Bukauskas (2013-14, Stone Bridge High School), Connor Jones (2012-13, Great Bridge High School), Nathan Kirby (2011-12, James River High School), Nick Thompson (2010-11, Western Branch High School), Kyle Crockett (2009-10, Poquoson High School), Ethan Carter (2008-09, Menchville High School), Austin Stadler (2007-08, James River High School), and Neil Ramirez (2006-07, Kempsville High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Andrew 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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