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**BRANDON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MISSISSIPPI VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 16, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Callie Minshew of Brandon High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Mississippi Volleyball Player of the Year. Minshew is the first Gatorade Mississippi Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Brandon 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 Minshew as Mississippi'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, Minshew joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahlerlert 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-11 junior outside hitter led the Bulldogs to a 39-2 record and the Class III state championship this past season. Minshew amassed 580 kills, 335 digs, 105 service aces and 97 blocks. She has been a First Team All-State and All-Region selection each of the past two seasons and was also named to the All-State Tournament Team.

A devoted member of her church community and a member of the Beta Club, Minshew has volunteered locally on behalf of a retirement home, a soup kitchen, food donation drives and youth volleyball programs. "Callie Minshew is exceptional in all aspects of the game," said Melissa Denson, head coach at Clinton High. "She's the most athletic attacker in the gym, whether she's in the front or back row. She hits so hard and can make any shot to avoid blockers and defense. She's also one of the best blockers and servers around."

Minshew has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Minshew joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Volleyball Players of the Year Emma Funk (2016-17, Our Lady Academy), Conley Chinn (2015-16, Jackson Academy), Blake Mohler (2014-15, Ocean Springs High School), Brittany Corder (2013-14, Our Lady Academy), Breann Hedin (2012-13, Long Beach High School), Sarah Farmer (2011-12, Tupelo High School), Victoria Nutting (2010-11, Hancock High School), Alison Welch (2009-10, Olive Branch High School), Charquita Anderson (2008-09, Southaven High School) and Claire Franks (2007-08, Olive Branch High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Minshew 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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