

**MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE CALIFORNIA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 15, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Natalie Berty of Mater Dei High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade California Volleyball Player of the Year. Berty is the second Gatorade California Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Mater Dei 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 Berty as California'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, Berty joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahlert High School, Iowa), Alisha Glass (2005-06, Leland Public High School, Mich.), Jordan Larson (2004-05, Logan View High School, Neb.) and Foluke Akinradewo (2004-05, St. Thomas High School, Fla.).

The 6-foot-3 senior outside hitter led the Monarchs to a 43-2 record and the Open Division state championship this past season. Berty recorded 532 kills, 323 digs, 54 blocks and 33 service aces. The California Interscholastic Foundation Player of the Year and a 2018-19 Under Armour First Team All-American, she was also named an All-American by PrepVolleyball.com, FloVolleyball and MaxPreps.

Berty has volunteered locally on behalf of the Blind Children's Learning Center, youth volleyball programs and Christmas toy drives for the needy. "Natalie Berty is just a great all-around player," said Katy Daly, head coach at Santa Margarita High School. "She's a very strong attacker and solid blocker, and she knows the game so well. She's a natural leader and a great role model for younger players. She's been a huge contributor to Mater Dei's success the last few years."

Berty has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Stanford University 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.

Berty joins recent Gatorade California Volleyball Players of the Year Devon Chang (2017-18, Santa Margarita Catholic High School), Lexi Sun (2016-17, Santa Fe Christian School), Kathryn Plummer (2015-16, Aliso Niguel High School), Yaasmeen Bedart-Ghani (2014-15, Redondo Union High School), and Taylor Nelson (2013-14, Granite Bay High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Berty has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [www.Gatorade.com/POY](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).