

**YORKTOWN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE INDIANA 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 Kenzie Knuckles of Yorktown High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade Indiana Volleyball Player of the Year. Knuckles is the second Gatorade Indiana Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Yorktown 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 Knuckles as Indiana'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, Knuckles 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 5-foot-7 senior outside hitter led the Tigers to a 34-0 record, the Class 4A state championship and a No. 3 national ranking according to PrepVolleyball.com. Knuckles recorded 396 kills, 363 digs, 32 blocks and 30 service aces. The MaxPreps and FloVolleyball National Player of the Year, she was a four-time First Team All-State selection and a 2018-19 Under Armour First Team All-American.

A member of her school's Student Council, Knuckles has volunteered locally on behalf of Project US, which supports students with special needs. "Kenzie Knuckles might be undersized, but she's not under-hearted," said Mike Dodrill, head coach at Burriss High School. "The kid is a melding of desire and physical ability. If you single blocked her, she scored. If you doubled her, she still scored, and if you tripled, then they'd set someone else with a wide open net. We tried to attack anywhere she wasn't, then added 15 feet to that."

Knuckles has maintained a 3.76 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Nebraska 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.

Knuckles joins recent Gatorade Indiana Volleyball Players of the Year Melani Shaffmaster (2017-18, New Castle High School), Nia Robinson (2016-17, Cathedral High School), Kendall White (2015-16, Cathedral High School), Carly Skjodt (2014-15, Carmel High School), and Azariah Stahl (2013-14, Elkhart Central High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Knuckles 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).