

**LINCOLN LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 15, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Marriah Buss of Lincoln Lutheran High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade Nebraska Volleyball Player of the Year. Buss is the first Gatorade Nebraska Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Lincoln Lutheran 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 Buss as Nebraska'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, Buss 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 junior outside hitter recorded 637 kills, 306 digs, 60 blocks and 51 service aces this past season, leading the Warriors (34-4) to the Class C1 state final. Captain of the Lincoln Journal Star Super-State Team, she was selected to the Omaha World-Herald All-Nebraska First Team and was named a PrepVolleyball.com All-American.

A devoted member of her church community, Buss has served as a peer tutor in her school and has volunteered locally on behalf of youth volleyball programs. "Marriah Buss is the real deal," said Jody Pelan, head coach at Aquinas High. "She's highly skilled in all facets of the game and has the ability to simply take over a match. She's a tremendous hitter with lots of power and the ability to place her shots, but she also plays great defense in the back row and passes very well."

Buss has maintained a 3.70 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.

Buss joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Volleyball Players of the Year Jaela Zimmerman (2017-18, Malcolm High School), Brooke Heyne (2016-17, Skutt Catholic High School), Raegan LeGrand (2015-16, Papillion-La Vista South High School), Megan Wickey (2014-15, Concordia High School), and Olivia Boender (2013-14, Waverly High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Buss 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.