

IMMACULATE HEART ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEW JERSEY 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 Anna Morris of Immaculate Heart Academy as its 2018-19 Gatorade New Jersey Volleyball Player of the Year. Morris is the fifth Gatorade New Jersey Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Immaculate Heart Academy.

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 Morris as New Jersey'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, Morris joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahler 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 junior middle blocker led the Eagles to a 39-1 record and both the Non-Public and Tournament of Champions state titles this past season. Morris compiled 381 kills, 230 digs, 110 blocks and 58 service aces while posting a kill percentage of .618 and a hitting percentage of .510. Also the 2018 NJ.com Volleyball Player of the Year, Morris was a First Team All-State selection. She concluded her junior year with 849 kills and 247 blocks in her prep volleyball career.

Morris has twice participated in the US Olympic National Team Trials for basketball. She has volunteered locally as an Immaculate Heart Blue Eagle Ambassador and with Camp Acorn, a community for disabled teens and adults. She has also donated her time as a youth volleyball and basketball coach. "Anna is really a phenomenal all-around player," said Jason Carcich, head coach of Wayne Valley High. "She does just about everything well."

Morris has maintained a 3.77 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.

Morris joins Gatorade New Jersey Volleyball Players of the Year Julia Morris (2017-2018, Immaculate Heart Academy), Elena Montgomery (2016-17, Ramapo High School), Maria Bellinger (2015-16, Paramus High School), Caitlyn Floyd (2014-15, Immaculate Heart Academy), and Nia Reed (2013-14, Immaculate Heart Academy) among the state's list of former award winners.

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