

**LA CUEVA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW MEXICO 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 Brie Mortensen of La Cueva High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade New Mexico Volleyball Player of the Year. Mortensen is the third Gatorade New Mexico Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from La Cueva 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 Mortensen as New Mexico'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, Mortensen 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 5-foot-6 senior setter led the Bears to a 22-0 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Mortensen compiled 775 assists, 163 digs, 47 service aces, 41 kills and 21 blocks. The District 2-5A Player of the Year, Mortensen is a two-time First Team All-State selection. She concluded her prep volleyball career with 2,482 assists and 574 digs.

Mortensen has volunteered locally at a food bank and homeless shelter and as part of community beautification projects. She has also donated her time as a youth volleyball coach. "Brie led her team to an undefeated season and she was really the quarterback who made it all work," said Al Rosen, head coach of Centennial High. "She is a standout."

Mortensen has maintained a weighted 3.99 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at New Mexico State 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.

Mortensen joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Volleyball Players of the Year Cat Kelly (2017-18 & 2016-2017, Sandia Preparatory School), Abby Stomp (2015-16, La Cueva High School), and Amanda Carroll (2014-15 & 2013-14, Sandia High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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