

**BARRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE RHODE ISLAND 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 Maile Somera of Barrington High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade Rhode Island Volleyball Player of the Year. Somera is the first Gatorade Rhode Island Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Barrington 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 Somera as Rhode Island'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, Somera 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 state's two-time returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-9 senior outside hitter slammed 474 kills and recorded 233 digs this past season, leading the Eagles (16-3) to the Division I state championship match. Somera also tallied 57 service aces and 19 blocks while posting a kill percentage of .551 and a hitting percentage of .428. A three-time Division I Player of the Year, she concluded her prep volleyball career with 1,387 kills and 832 digs.

A member of her school's debate club and environmental club, Somera has volunteered locally on a fundraising campaign to benefit cancer research and as a youth volleyball coach. "Maile is by far the best player in the state of Rhode Island," said Nikolai Wojciechowski, head coach of La Salle Academy. "She is the best hitter, server and passer in the state, hands down."

Somera has maintained a weighted 4.15 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to attend Yale University, where she will play volleyball, beginning 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.

Three-time winner Somera joins Gatorade Rhode Island Volleyball Players of the Year Jenna Bridges (2015-16, Exeter-West Greenwich High School), Jen Donnelly (2014-15, Exeter-West Greenwich High School), and Samantha Higgins (2013-14, Coventry High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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