

**BRIARCREST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TENNESSEE 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 Alyiah Wells of Briarcrest Christian School as its 2018-19 Gatorade Tennessee Volleyball Player of the Year. Wells is the first Gatorade Tennessee Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Briarcrest Christian 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 Wells as Tennessee'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, Wells 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-2 senior middle blocker led the Saints to a 40-2 record and the Division II-AA state championship this past season. Wells recorded 545 kills, 315 digs, 116 blocks and 50 aces. The State Tournament MVP, she was named a PrepVolleyball.com All-American and a 2018-19 Under Armour Second Team All-American in addition to earning national ALL-USA Volleyball Second Team honors.

A devoted member of her church youth group, Wells has served as a tutor and a mentor in her school, and has volunteered locally on behalf of a food bank and youth sports programs. "Alyiah Wells is an impactful player in all parts of the game," said Kari Duncan, volleyball coordinator at St. Mary's Episcopal School. "She's athletic and a threat no matter where she is on the court. She hits over the block with strength and accuracy, but she also plays with finesse."

Wells has maintained a weighted 4.28 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Alabama 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.

Wells joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Volleyball Players of the Year Nicklin Hames (2017-18, Webb School of Knoxville), Logan Eggleston (2016-17, Brentwood High School), Lauren Dorrell (2015-16, Father Ryan High School), Gabby Gray (2014-15, Baylor School), and Hunter Thompson (2013-14, Brentwood High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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