

**ESSEX HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT 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 Maddie Folsom of Essex High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade Vermont Volleyball Player of the Year. Folsom is the second Gatorade Vermont Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Essex 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 Folsom as Vermont'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, Folsom 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- senior middle hitter led the Hornets to a 17-0 record and the state championship this past season. Folsom tallied 73 kills, 62 service aces and 29 blocks while posting a kill percentage of .480 and a hitting percentage of .316. She was a First Team All-State selection.

Folsom has volunteered locally with Bounds for Hounds, which raises money for local animal shelters, in addition to donating her time to an elementary school literacy outreach program and as a youth volleyball and basketball coach. "When Maddie is on the court, she owns the net both offensively and defensively," said Jen Ligouri, head coach of Essex High School. "She never gives up on a ball and hustles continually on the court to not allow it to hit the floor."

Folsom has maintained an A average in the classroom. She remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Folsom joins recent Gatorade Vermont Volleyball Players of the Year Charlotte Frivoll (2017-18, Essex High School).

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