

## **ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 13, 2020) — In its 35<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Rachel Richardson of St. John's College High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade District of Columbia Volleyball Player of the Year**. Richardson is the seventh Gatorade District of Columbia Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. John's College 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 Richardson as District of Columbia'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, Richardson 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-9 junior outside hitter led the Cadets to a 33-3 record and the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference title and DCSAA tournament championship this past season. Richardson compiled 465 kills with a .527 kill percentage along with 253 digs, 44 service aces and 18 blocks. The WCAC Player of the Year and a Washington Post First Team All-Met honoree, she concluded her junior year with 1,340 kills and 708 digs in her prep volleyball career.

Richardson has volunteered locally with the children's youth ministry at her church and at a senior citizen home. She has also donated her time by serving multiple animal shelters. "Rachel was the driving force behind their championship season," said Dave Geiser, head coach of the Academy of the Holy Cross. "She could and did hit from everywhere on the court."

Richardson has maintained a weighted 4.37 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.

Richardson joins recent Gatorade District of Columbia Volleyball Players of the Year Lauren Antonucci (2018 – 19, St. John's College High School), Rebecca Frye (2017-18 & 2016-17, St. John's College High School), Jeanne Westney (2015-16, St. John's College High School), Evelyn Gray (2014-15, Maret School), and Becca Bateman (2013-14, St. John's College High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Richardson 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](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).