

MOUNT DE SALES ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MARYLAND VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 13, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Mary Grace Goyena of Mount de Sales Academy** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Maryland Volleyball Player of the Year**. Goyena is the first Gatorade Maryland Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Mount de Sales Academy.

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 Goyena as Maryland'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, Goyena joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahlert 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 junior outside hitter led the Sailors to a 23-3 record and the Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland championship this past season. Goyena recorded 410 kills, 133 digs and 58 service aces, while posting a hitting percentage of .405. She is a three-time All-IAAM selection and a three-time member of the Baltimore Sun All-Metro First Team.

A devoted member of her church community, Goyena has volunteered locally on behalf of an assisted living facility and youth volleyball programs. "You really never get a rotation to breathe, because Goyena is always a hitting threat," said Steven Fix, head coach at St. Paul's School. "She's very efficient hitting from the outside pin and she's become a solid back row defender too."

Goyena has maintained a 4.21 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.

Goyena joins recent Gatorade Maryland Volleyball Players of the Year Jenaisya Moore (2018 – 19, 2017-18 & 2016-17, Northwest High School), Megan McTigue (2015-16, Academy of the Holy Cross), Liz Twilley (2014-15, Oakdale High School), and Sydney Biniak (2013-14, Howard High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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

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