

JACKSON ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MISSISSIPPI 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 **Parker Bracken of Jackson Academy** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Mississippi Volleyball Player of the Year**. Bracken is the second Gatorade Mississippi Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Jackson 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 Bracken as Mississippi'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, Bracken 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 5-foot-10 junior outside hitter led the Raiders to a 43-3 record and the Midsouth Association of Independent Schools championship this past season. Bracken amassed 648 kills, 517 digs, 120 aces and 37 blocks, while posting a hitting percentage of .459. A Clarion Ledger First Team All-State selection and the MAIS Player of the Year, she is a five-time All-MAIS honoree.

Bracken has served as a mentor for elementary school students and has volunteered locally on behalf of Operation Christmas Child and youth volleyball programs. "Parker Bracken has the most complete package of talent that I've seen in this state," said Lauren Lanford, head coach at Presbyterian Christian School. "She can play any position on the court at an extremely high level and she's able to dominate."

Bracken has maintained a 3.78 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.

Bracken joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Volleyball Players of the Year Callie Minschew (2018 – 19 & 2017-18, Brandon High School), Emma Funk (2016-17, Our Lady Academy), Conley Chinn (2015-16, Jackson Academy), Blake Mohler (2014-15, Ocean Springs High School), and Brittany Corder (2013-14, Our Lady Academy) among the state's list of former award winners.

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