

**MOUNTAINSIDE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE OREGON 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 **Izzi Szulczewski of Mountainside High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Oregon Volleyball Player of the Year**. Szulczewski is the first Gatorade Oregon Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Mountainside 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 Szulczewski as Oregon'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, Szulczewski 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-7 senior setter and outside hitter recorded 392 assists and 333 kills this past season, leading the Mavericks (24-7) to the Class 6A state quarterfinals. Szulczewski also compiled 235 digs, 47 service aces and 46 blocks while posting a .430 kill percentage and a .266 hitting percentage. The 2019 Metro League Player of the Year, she was a two-time First Team All-League selection and a 2019 First Team All-State Tournament honoree.

Szulczewski has volunteered locally as part of an elementary school literacy outreach program, and has donated her time as a youth volleyball coach and referee. "Izzi set while in the back row and was their leading hitter in the front," said Mark Mendak, head coach of Wilson High School. "She's an all-around player that produces consistently and positively."

Szulczewski has maintained a weighted 3.34 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Oregon State University 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.

Szulczewski joins recent Gatorade Oregon Volleyball Players of the Year Rose Booth (2018-19, Jesuit High School), Chloe Brown (2017-18, Southridge High School), Kathryn Decker (2016-17, Jesuit High School), Nicole Peterson (2015-16, Jesuit High School), Payton Rund (2014-15, West Albany High School), and Hannah Troutman (2013-14, Crook County High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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