

NORTH KINGSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE RHODE ISLAND 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 **Keri Spitler of North Kingstown High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Rhode Island Volleyball Player of the Year**. Spitler is the fifth Gatorade Rhode Island Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from North Kingstown 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 Spitler as Rhode Island'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, Spitler 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-11 senior outside hitter led the Skippers to a 19-0 record and a second-straight Division I state title this past season. Spitler recorded 283 kills, 129 digs, 74 service aces, 67 blocks and 41 assists while posting a .596 kill percentage and a .398 hitting percentage. A transfer from the Houston area this school year, she was a First Team All-State selection and the MVP of the state tournament.

Spitler, whose father was the Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Air Station Houston before moving to Rhode Island, volunteered extensively as part of Hurricane Harvey cleanup in 2017. She has also donated her time at a daycare center and as a youth volleyball coach. "Keri was the most effective hitter in the state this season," said Mike Harrington, the head boys coach at Bishop Hendricken High School. "She also has good back-row skills along with a very effective and consistent jump serve that scored points for her team."

Spitler has maintained a weighted 4.53 GPA 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.

Spitler joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Volleyball Players of the Year Maile Somera (2018 – 19, 2017-18 & 2016-17, Barrington High School), Jenna Bridges (2015-16, Exeter-West Greenwich High School), Jen Donnelly (2014-15, Exeter-West Greenwich High School), and Samantha Higgins (2013-14, Coventry High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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