

MCGILL-TOOLEN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE ALABAMA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 9, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Alice Wood of McGill-Toolen Catholic High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Alabama Volleyball Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Wood as Alabama's best high school volleyball player, and she joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Kerri Walsh Jennings (1995-96, Archbishop Mitty High School, CA), April Ross (1999-00, Newport Harbor High School, CA) and Campbell Flynn (2024-25, Mercy High School, MI).

The 5-foot-9 junior setter amassed 1,356 assists, an average of 10.2 per set, and led the Yellowjackets (47-2) to the Class 7A state championship this past season. Wood also recorded 301 digs, 76 blocks, 59 service aces and 59 kills and was named to the 7A All-Tournament team. The Alabama High School Volleyball Coaches Association 7A Player of the Year, she was named an American Volleyball Coaches Association Second Team All-American.

Wood has volunteered locally with Little Sisters of the Poor elderly care facility by serving as a bingo caller and a volunteer for the Lawn Party fundraiser. She has also donated her time to multiple community service projects through McGill-Toolen Catholic High School's Key Club, including Boxes of Joy which collected Christmas gifts for children. "Alice Wood is the best setter, and maybe even the best volleyball player I have seen in Alabama in a very long time," said Casey Craig, Daphne High School head coach. "The way she affects the entire match is something special to watch."

Wood has maintained a 3.86 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play volleyball at Kansas State University beginning in the fall of 2027.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the winners in each sport.

As part of Gatorade's commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 organizations.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X (Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.

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