

ST. CHARLES NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE ILLINOIS VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 9, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Haley Burgdorf of St. Charles North High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Illinois 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 Burgdorf as Illinois' 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 6-foot senior outside hitter compiled 435 kills and 198 digs this past season, leading the Northstars (35-4) to the Class 4A sectional finals. Burgdorf also tallied 52 service aces, 24 assists and 23 blocks while posting a .486 kill percentage and a .312 hitting percentage. A two-time American Volleyball Coaches Association First Team All-American, Burgdorf is ranked as the nation's No. 35 recruit in the Class of 2026 by PrepDig.com. She concluded her prep volleyball career with 1,658 kills and 758 digs.

Burgdorf has volunteered locally at an assisted living and memory care center and with Feed My Starving Children. She has also donated her time as a youth volleyball coach. "Haley is a six-rotation player who has the ability to hit any shot," said Lisa Ston, head coach of St. Francis High School. "She scores effectively from both the front and back row and is a great passer and defender."

Burgdorf has maintained a weighted 4.33 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play volleyball at Pennsylvania State University this fall.

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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