

SUMMIT COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE OHIO VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 9, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Kendall Northern of Summit Country Day School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Ohio 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 Northern as Ohio'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 6-foot-2 senior middle blocker and outside hitter amassed 601 kills and 273 digs this past season, leading the Silver Knights (23-5) to the Division V state semifinals. Northern also recorded 53 service aces and 20 assists while posting a .528 kill percentage and .439 hitting percentage. An Under Armour All-American Game participant, she concluded her prep volleyball career with 1,236 kills and a .527 kill percentage.

Northern has volunteered locally at Tender Mercies, which provides support for homeless adults battling mental illness. She has also donated her time as a peer tutor in French and as part of multiple community service initiatives through her church. "Kendall is absurdly talented and genuinely raised the level of the group around her," said Matt Ellis, head coach of Lakota East High School. "Kendall really paved the way for Summit and its program."

Northern has maintained a 3.83 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](https://www.x.com/Gatorade).

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