

BRENTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE TENNESSEE VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 9, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Eliza McKnight of Brentwood High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Tennessee 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 McKnight as Tennessee'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-1 senior middle blocker and outside hitter recorded 475 kills and 268 digs this past season, leading the Bruins (29-6) to the Class AAA state championship match. McKnight also tallied 42 blocks and 24 service aces while posting a .446 kill percentage and a .321 hitting percentage. The District 10-AAA Most Valuable Player, McKnight was the state's 2025 PrepDig.com Breakout Player of the Year. She concluded her prep volleyball career with 1,760 kills.

A member of the Brentwood High School National Honor Society and the Mu Alpha Theta math honors society, McKnight has volunteered locally as part of multiple community service initiatives through the Greater Nashville chapter of the National Charity League. "Eliza was one of their top passers, servers and attackers," said Rick Hess, head coach of Page High School. "She is such a dynamic player, and when we prepared for BHS this year, she was a main focus on all accounts for us."

McKnight has maintained a weighted 4.46 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play volleyball at Western Kentucky 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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