

BYRON NELSON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE TEXAS VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 9, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Sophee Peterson of Byron Nelson High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Texas 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 Peterson as Texas' 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-11 junior setter amassed 1,459 assists this past season for an average of 13.9 per set, leading the Bobcats (42-0) to the 6A Division 1 state championship and a No. 1 national ranking on MaxPreps. The nation's No. 1 ranked player in her class by PrepVolleyball.com, Peterson also recorded 274 digs, 161 kills and 70 blocks. She was named an American Volleyball Coaches Association First Team All-American and she's been an anchor of a program that's won 78 matches in a row en route to becoming the first team to win back-to-back 6A titles in Texas (82-1 in that span).

Peterson is a member of her school's prestigious BioMedical Academy and earned her "white coat" rating this year. She has donated her time extensively to the Byron Nelson Youth Volleyball Camp as a program leader throughout the year and particularly during the summer. "What stands out for me about Sophee Peterson is her competitive fire," said Chris Tobolski, Chief Editor for Vballrecruiter.com. "She exhibits the same level of intensity, excitement and enthusiasm in a one-sided match as she does in a state final with everything on the line. That type of energy, combined with her skillset, elevates the play of everyone around her. As a setter, she's unparalleled in making Byron Nelson's offense go. Factor in her blocking production this season and I'd say no one had a greater impact on her team's success than she did."

Peterson has maintained a 4.64 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play volleyball at Texas A&M 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](https://www.x.com/Gatorade).

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