

**JONESBORO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ARKANSAS VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 15, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Clara Parker of Jonesboro High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade Arkansas Volleyball Player of the Year. Parker is the third Gatorade Arkansas Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Jonesboro High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Parker as Arkansas's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Parker joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahler High School, Iowa), Alisha Glass (2005-06, Leland Public High School, Mich.), Jordan Larson (2004-05, Logan View High School, Neb.) and Foluke Akinradewo (2004-05, St. Thomas High School, Fla.).

The 5-foot-10 junior outside hitter led the Hurricane to a 32-3 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Parker slammed 413 kills at a kill percentage rate of .464 to go with 316 digs, 43 service aces and 43 blocks. Also the Arkansas Preps Player of the Year, Parker was the Class 5A state tournament MVP. She concluded her junior year with 1,018 kills and 865 digs in her prep volleyball career.

A member of the Jonesboro High student council, Parker has volunteered locally as part of neighborhood beautification projects and with the Jonesboro Hispanic Center. She has also donated her time to multiple community service initiatives through the Junior Auxiliary of Jonesboro. "Clara was one we kept tabs on no matter where she was," said Reed Fogleman, head coach of Paragould High. "She was a hitting threat from the back row and the front row. Even when we would key on her hitting, she was still very hard to stop."

Parker has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Arkansas beginning in the fall of 2020.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Parker joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Volleyball Players of the Year Haley Warner (2017-18, Fayetteville High School), Ella May Powell (2016-17 & (2015-16, Fayetteville High School), Haley Warner (2014-15, Fayetteville High School), and Drew Jones (2013-14, SoutHigh Schoolide High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Parker has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.