

## **CENTURY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NORTH DAKOTA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 15, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Lauren Ware of Century High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade North Dakota Volleyball Player of the Year. Ware is the third Gatorade North Dakota Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Century 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 Ware as North Dakota'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, Ware 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 state's returning Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year, the 6-foot-5 junior middle blocker led the Patriots to a 34-5 record and the Class A state championship this past season. Ware slammed 586 kills to go with 187 digs, 86 blocks and 48 service aces, posting a kill percentage of .607 and a hitting percentage of .504. A two-time First Team All-State selection, she concluded her junior year with 1,010 kills in her prep volleyball career.

Ware has volunteered locally with Peer to Peer, mentoring students with disabilities. She has also donated her time to the Bismarck Emergency Food Pantry and Salvation Army. "Nobody in our area affects the outcome of the game both offensively and defensively like Lauren Ware," said Jay Schobinger, head coach of Dickinson High. "6-foot-5 players with her ability don't show up around here very often."

Ware has maintained a weighted 3.89 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school this fall.

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.

Ware joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Volleyball Players of the Year Megan Gaffaney (2017-18, Jamestown High School), Regan Dennis (2016-17, Century High School), Katie Scherr (2015-16, Century High School), Alivia Fraase (2014-15 & 2013-14, Shanley High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Ware 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](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).