

**NATION FORD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA 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 Sophie Fischer of Nation Ford High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade South Carolina Volleyball Player of the Year. Fischer is the first Gatorade South Carolina Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Nation Ford 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 Fischer as South Carolina'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, Fischer joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahlert 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 6-foot-5 junior outside hitter and middle blocker led the Falcons to a 46-7-1 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Fischer recorded 618 kills, 345 digs, 65 aces and 51 blocks. The Charlotte Observer and Region 3 Player of the Year, she was named a PrepVolleyball.com All-American.

Fischer has donated her time to youth volleyball programs and has volunteered locally on behalf of Families Forward Charlotte, easing the burden of poverty on children and their families in Mecklenburg County. "Fischer is a dominant force in the front row, both blocking and attacking, and she has an aggressive jump float serve too," said Megan Perry, head coach at Northwestern High School. "She's quite the talented volleyball player, and also a sweet, hard-working kid and a positive leader with her teammates."

Fischer has maintained a 3.45 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.

Fischer joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Volleyball Players of the Year Thayer Hall (2017-18, 2016-17 & 2015-16, Dorman High School), Jamila Johnson (2014-15, St. Joseph's Catholic School), and Maddie Palmer (2013-14, Hillcrest High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Fischer 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.