

BASHA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE ARIZONA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 13, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Jaelyn Hodge of Basha High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Arizona Volleyball Player of the Year**. Hodge is the first Gatorade Arizona Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Basha 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 Hodge as Arizona'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, Hodge 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 6-foot-1 senior outside hitter led the Bears to a 26-16 record and the Conference 6A state championship this past season. Hodge, who had to sit out the first 23 matches of the season because of the state's transfer rules, recorded 397 kills with a .476 kill percentage and a .320 hitting percentage, including 33 kills in a five-set win over Perry High in the state final. Ranked as the No. 20 recruit in the Class of 2020 by PrepVolleyball.com, Hodge also tallied 190 digs, 29 blocks and 24 service aces. She concluded her prep volleyball career with 954 kills.

Hodge has volunteered locally with RISE Athletics, a sports foundation for underprivileged children. She has also donated her time to Feed My Starving Children as well as Kitchen on the Street. "Jaelyn is a dominating force at this level and is very difficult to stop," said Ben Maxfield, head coach of Corona del Sol High. "While Basha was solid before she became eligible, afterwards they were dominant."

Hodge has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Arizona 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.

Hodge joins recent Gatorade Arizona Volleyball Players of the Year Shannon Shields (2018 – 19, Xavier College Prep), Brooke Nuneviller (2017-18 & 2016-17, Corona del Sol High School), Khalia Lanier (2015-16, Xavier College Prep.), Jenna Tunnell (2014-15, Desert Vista High School), and Sarah Sponcil (2013-14, Veritas Preparatory Academy) among the state's list of former award winners.

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

###