

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

CHICAGO (May 6, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Jordan Middleton of Hamilton High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Arizona Volleyball Player of the Year. Middleton is the first Gatorade Arizona Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Hamilton 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 Middleton 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 May, Middleton 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-1 junior outside hitter led the Huskies to a 17-2 record and the Conference 6A state championship this past season. Middleton compiled 286 kills with a .502 kill percentage and a .333 hitting percentage, including 20 kills in a four-set win over Perry High in the state final. Ranked as the nation's No. 2 recruit in the Class of 2022 by PrepVolleyball.com, Middleton also recorded 141 digs, 33 blocks and 27 service aces. The Conference 6A Player of the Year, she concluded her junior year with 1,040 kills in her prep volleyball career.

Middleton has volunteered locally at a homeless shelter and food bank, and she has donated her time as a youth camp counselor. "Jordan is one of the most dynamic and explosive players to ever play at Hamilton," said Sharon Vanis, head coach of Hamilton High. "Her ability to attack from the back row as well as on the front line and score for us has been a huge asset to our program."

Middleton has maintained a 3.75 in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Southern California beginning in the fall of 2022.

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 works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Middleton joins recent Gatorade Arizona Volleyball Players of the Year Jaelyn Hodge (2019-20, Basha High School), Shannon Shields (2018-19, Xavier College Preparatory), and Brooke Nuneviller (2017-18 & 2016-17, Corona del Sol High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Middleton has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Middleton is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com, on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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