

**ST. MARY'S DOMINICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE LOUISIANA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 6, 2021) — In its 36<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Kate Baker of St. Mary's Dominican High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Louisiana Volleyball Player of the Year. Baker is the first Gatorade Louisiana Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Mary's Dominican 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 Baker as Louisiana'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, Baker 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-8 junior setter led St. Mary's to a 31-2 record and the Division I state championship this past season. Baker compiled 957 assists, 357 digs, 173 kills, 64 service aces and 33 blocks while posting a kill percentage of .464 and a hitting percentage of .367. The 2020 Division I state tournament MVP, Baker is a two-time Division I First Team All-State selection and the 2020 Louisiana Volleyball Coaches Association's Division I Player of the Year. She concluded her junior year with 2,741 assists, 1,164 digs and 640 kills in her prep volleyball career.

A member of the Mu Alpha Theta mathematics honor society, Baker has volunteered locally as part of multiple fundraising campaigns to benefit the Henry Aucoin Foundation, which supports pediatric heart patients and their families. "This season, Kate had to not only lead by example, but she also had to be the voice," said Jessica Chatellier, head coach of St. Mary's Dominican. "She truly had to put herself way outside of her comfort zone to take over this role. She was able to embrace the role and lead her team all the way to the top."

Baker has maintained a weighted 4.37 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play beach volleyball on scholarship at Louisiana State University 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.

Baker joins recent Gatorade Louisiana Volleyball Players of the Year Cicily Hidalgo (2019-20, Teurlings Catholic High School), and Ellie Holzman (2018-19, 2017-18 & 2016-17, Mount Carmel Academy), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Baker has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Baker 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com), on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).

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