

**BURNT HILLS-BALLSTON LAKE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW YORK 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 Carlie Rzeszotarski of Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade New York Volleyball Player of the Year. Rzeszotarski is the third Gatorade New York Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake 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 Rzeszotarski as New York'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, Rzeszotarski 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 recorded 290 kills, 141 digs and 40 service aces this past season, leading the Spartans to a 20-0 record and the Suburban Council championship. Rzeszotarski also compiled a hitting percentage of .493. A First Team All-State selection, she was the Suburban Council MVP and the Section 2 Player of the Year as well. She led the Spartans to the Class A state championship as a sophomore, earning state tournament MVP honors.

Rzeszotarski has volunteered locally on behalf of a Vacation Bible School and youth sports programs. "I don't think I've seen a better player than Carlie Rzeszotarski in the state during the last 10 years," said Christina Coons, head coach at Niskayuna High. "She's developed into a dominant player. Not only is she a go-to hitter in the front row or back row, she's also the definition of a team player. Her energy is infectious."

Rzeszotarski has maintained an A average 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 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.

Rzeszotarski joins recent Gatorade New York Volleyball Players of the Year Mychael Vernon (2019-20, Ossining High School), Beth Miller (2018-19, Portville High School), Mackenzie Cole (2017-18, Connetquot High School), and Yvette Burcescu (2016-17, Walter Panas High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Rzeszotarski has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Rzeszotarski 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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