

**ARUNDEL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MARYLAND VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 11, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Zaria Ragler** of **Arundel High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Maryland Volleyball Player of the Year**. Ragler is the second Gatorade Maryland Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Arundel 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 court, distinguishes Ragler as Maryland'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, Ragler joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners, 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 senior middle blocker led the Wildcats to a 20-1 record and the Class 4A state championship this past season. Ragler recorded 227 kills, 77 blocks, 68 digs and 49 service aces, while posting a .481 hitting percentage. A Washington Post All-Metro First Team selection, she was also named the Baltimore Sun All-Metro Player of the Year and the Capital Gazette Player of the Year.

A member of her school's Athletic Leadership Council, Ragler has volunteered locally on behalf of youth volleyball programs. "Zaria Ragler was dominant this year," said Tim Dunbar, head coach at Severna Park High School. "When they could get her the ball, she was almost unstoppable. She was better than anyone else I saw this year."

Ragler has maintained a 3.36 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Ohio State University 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Ragler joins recent Gatorade Maryland Volleyball Players of the Year Brooke Watts (2020-21, Arundel High School), Mary Grace Goyena (2019-20, Mount de Sales Academy), and Jenaisya Moore (2018-19, 2017-18, 2016-17, Northwest High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Ragler has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Ragler is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.