

**MUSSELMAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA 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 **Hannah Howard** of **Musselman High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade West Virginia Volleyball Player of the Year**. Howard is the fourth Gatorade West Virginia Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Musselman 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 Howard as West Virginia'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, Howard 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 5-foot-7 junior outside hitter led the Applemen to a 46-4-2 record and the Class AAA state championship this past season. Howard amassed 427 digs in addition to recording 478 kills, 79 service aces and 27 blocks. She is a three-time First Team All-Conference and three-time All-State selection.

A member of her school's Student Council and Varsity Club, Howard has volunteered locally on behalf of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. "Hannah Howard was a dominant force for Musselman," said Erica Manor, head coach at Morgantown High School. "She has a very diverse game—her receiving and defense are flawless, and she never seems to get rattled."

Howard has maintained a weighted 4.67 GPA 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Howard joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Volleyball Players of the Year Skylar Yates (2020-21, Hedgesville High School), Skye Stokes (2019-20, Oak Glen High School), Bryce Knapp (2018-19, Woodrow Wilson High School), and Tessa Wyner (2017-18, George Washington 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, Howard 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. Howard 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.