

**FAYETTEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ARKANSAS VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 13, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kennedy Phelan** of **Fayetteville High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Arkansas Volleyball Player of the Year**. Phelan is the fifth Gatorade Arkansas Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Fayetteville 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 Phelan as Arkansas' best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Phelan joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners, including Lexi Sun (2016-17, Santa Fe Christian School, Calif.), Jordan Larson (2004-05, Logan View High School, Neb.), Foluke Akinradewo (2004-05, St. Thomas High School, Fla.) and April Ross (1999-00, Newport Harbor High School, Calif.).

The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-8 senior setter led the Bulldogs to a 36-2 record and a third-straight Class 6A state championship this past season. Phelan amassed 977 assists, 227 digs and 217 kills while posting a kill percentage of .453 and a hitting percentage of .334. A MaxPreps.com First Team All-American selection, Phelan also recorded 80 service aces and 31 blocks. A four-time Class 6A First Team All-State honoree, she concluded her prep volleyball career with 3,972 assists.

Phelan has volunteered locally with special education students at Fayetteville High School, and she has donated her time at Potter's House of Northwest Arkansas, a philanthropic organization that connects communities across socioeconomic and cultural lines. "Kennedy is a rare player: composed, efficient, intelligent and lethal," said Natalie Throneberry, head coach of Fort Smith Southside High School. "She brings the whole package to the setting position. Not only can she defend, run an offense and attack, but she leads well and controls the floor with ease."

Phelan has maintained a 3.98 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Florida 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.

Two-time winner Phelan joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Volleyball Players of the Year Hannah Hogue (2020-21, Southside Schoolside High School), and Clara Parker (2019-20 & 2018-19, Jonesboro High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

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.