

**DUPONT MANUAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE KENTUCKY 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 **Nya Bunton** of **duPont Manual High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Kentucky Volleyball Player of the Year**. Bunton is the second Gatorade Kentucky Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from duPont Manual 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 Bunton as Kentucky’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, Bunton 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 6-foot-5 senior middle hitter led the Crimson to a 32-8 record and a berth in the 7th Region championship match this past season. Bunton amassed 578 kills, averaging 5.3 per set, to go with 53 blocks, 104 digs and 52 aces. A member of the Girls Under-19 U.S. National Team, Bunton was also named Ms. Volleyball by the Kentucky Volleyball Coaches Association.

Bunton has volunteered locally writing thank-you cards and assembling care packages for workers at nursing homes during the height of the pandemic. She also has donated her time as a member of the Junior Volleyball Association Social Justice Task Force, which seeks to foster an inclusive environment in the sport. “She played at another level that nobody could match physically and helped her team have an incredible year,” said Sacred Heart Academy head coach Brett Versen. “She blocked and attacked at a level you rarely ever see in high school.”

Bunton has maintained a 3.89 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Texas 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.

Bunton joins recent Gatorade Kentucky Volleyball Players of the Year Taylor Preston (2021-22, St. Henry District High School), Eleanor Beavin (2020-21, Mercy Academy), Anna DeBeer (2019-20, Assumption High School), and Rylee Rader (2018-19, Assumption 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.