

**ESSEX HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT 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 **Jocelyn Ray** of **Essex High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Vermont Volleyball Player of the Year**. Ray is the fifth Gatorade Vermont Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Essex 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 Ray as Vermont'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, Ray 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 5-foot-10 senior middle hitter led the Hornets (17-0) to an undefeated season and second consecutive Division I state championship this past season. Ray recorded 120 kills, 36 aces, 25 digs and nine blocks, posting a .373 hitting percentage. She was a First Team All-State selection and was also named a Senior Tri-State All-State, encompassing Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.

Ray has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple philanthropic organizations, including the American Red Cross and as a year-round contributor to The Classic Mike Loyer Foundation, which raises money for families in Vermont dealing with accidental worksite deaths. "Jocelyn is not only an excellent hitter, she's an excellent captain and teammate," said Essex High School coach Jen Liguori. "She's the kind of player every coach would love to have on their team."

Ray has maintained a 3.54 GPA in the classroom. She will attend Castleton University this fall, where she will play volleyball.

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.

Ray joins recent Gatorade Vermont Volleyball Players of the Year Jazmin Munson (2021-22, Essex High School), Molly Ardren (2020-21, Essex High School), Syrah Wright (2019-20, Mount Mansfield Union High School), and Maddie Folsom (2018-19, Essex 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.

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