

**MOTHER MCAULEY LIBERAL ARTS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ILLINOIS VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 8, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ellie White** of **Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Illinois Volleyball Player of the Year**. White is the second Gatorade Illinois Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the court, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes White as Illinois’ best high school volleyball player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Harper Murray (2022-23, Skyline High School, Mich.), Kerri Walsh Jennings (1995-96, Archbishop Mitty High School, Calif.) and April Ross (1999-00, Newport Harbor High School, Calif.).

The state’s returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-11 senior outside hitter led the Mighty Macs to a 39-5 record and a second straight Class 4A state championship this past season. White recorded 484 kills with a .437 kill percentage and a .402 hitting percentage, including 18 kills in McAuley’s 2-1 win over Benet Academy in the state final. A natural setter, White also compiled 313 digs, 95 blocks and 37 service aces while earning MaxPreps.com First Team All-American honors for a second straight year. She concluded her prep volleyball career with 1,923 kills and 1,016 digs.

A student ambassador at Mother McAuley, White is active in her school’s student government. She has volunteered locally as a youth mentor and volleyball coach, and she has donated her time as a peer tutor through the Mother McAuley National Honor Society. “Ellie truly is a six-rotation outside hitter,” said Ellen Yopchick, head coach of St. Laurence High School. “She is a primary passer, go-to attacker, dynamic blocker and handles 50 percent of their serve receptions. Without Ellie, I am not sure they win the state championship.”

White has maintained a 3.79 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Michigan 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 White joins recent Gatorade Illinois Volleyball Players of the Year Katie Hurta (2021-22, Nazareth Academy), Rachel Muisenga (2020-21, Benet Academy), and Lexi Rodriguez (2019-20, Sterling High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade’s commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners’ grants have totaled more than \$4.9 million across more than 1,600 organizations.

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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