

**ST. JAMES ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE KANSAS VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 9, 2025) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Reese Messer** of **St. James Academy** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Kansas Volleyball Player of the Year**. Messer is the fifth Gatorade Kansas Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. James Academy.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their success on the court, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Messer as Kansas' best high school volleyball player, and she joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as April Ross (1999-00, Newport Harbor High School, Ca.), Kerri Walsh Jennings (1995-96, Archbishop Mitty High School, Ca.) and Ayden Ames (2023-24, Prosper High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-11 senior setter and middle hitter amassed 636 assists and 345 digs this past season, leading the Thunder (32-7) to the Class 5A state semifinals. Messer also recorded 328 kills, 55 blocks and 38 service aces while posting a .422 kill percentage and a .324 hitting percentage at net. A First Team All-American selection by the American Volleyball Coaches Association, she was the Class 5A Player of the Year. Ranked as the nation's No. 6 recruit in the Class of 2025 by PrepDig.com, she concluded her prep volleyball career with 3,185 assists, 998 digs and 707 kills.

Messer has volunteered locally on behalf of Youthfront, a summer program for teens. "This year truly highlighted Reese's leadership, competitive spirit and impressive versatility as a player," said Lindsay Zych Franco, head coach of Bishop Miege High School. "She was responsible for scoring the majority of her team's points, both as a setter and as an offensive threat. She is a game-changing offensive force."

Messer has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play volleyball at the University of Southern California this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states across 12 different high school sports - 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.

Messer joins recent Gatorade Kansas Volleyball Players of the Year Logan Parks (2023-24, Blue Valley North High School), Brooklyn DeLeye (2022-23 & 2021-22, Washburn Rural High School) and Caroline Bien (2020-21, St. Thomas Aquinas 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, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$5.6 million in grants to winners across more than 2,000 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 Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.

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