

LAFAYETTE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MISSOURI 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 **Maya Witherspoon of Lafayette High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Missouri Volleyball Player of the Year**. Witherspoon is the third Gatorade Missouri Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Lafayette High School.

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 Witherspoon as Missouri’s 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 6-foot senior outside hitter led the Lancers to a 32-5 record and a second straight Class 5 state championship this past season. Witherspoon compiled 440 kills and 303 digs, including an 18-kill, 10-dig effort in Lafayette High School’s 3-0 win over Ozark High School in the state final. Witherspoon also recorded 62 service aces, 41 blocks and 28 assists while posting a .485 kill percentage and a .343 hitting percentage on the year. An AVCA Second Team All-American selection and a two-time St. Louis Metro Player of the Year, she concluded her prep volleyball career with a school-record 1,467 kills.

A long-time member of her area’s chapter of the National Charity League, Witherspoon has volunteered locally with the Special Olympics and the St. Louis Diaper Bank. She has also donated her time to the Greater St. Louis Book Fair and Lutheran Senior Services. “Maya is such a dynamic player for six rotations,” said Adeana Brewer, head coach of Ozark High School. “She attacks very aggressively from both the front and back row. She is also very athletic and has multiple tools in her tool box.”

Witherspoon has maintained a weighted 3.76 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play volleyball at Vanderbilt 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 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.

Witherspoon joins recent Gatorade Missouri Volleyball Players of the Year Carlie Cisneros (2023-24 & 2022-23, Liberty North High School), Ella Swindle (2021-22, Rock Bridge High School) and Addison Beagle (2020-21, Liberty North 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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