

## **HIDDEN VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE VIRGINIA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 9, 2025) — In its 40<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Caleigh Ponn** of **Hidden Valley High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Virginia Volleyball Player of the Year**. Ponn is the first Gatorade Virginia Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Hidden Valley 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 Ponn as Virginia’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 5-foot-6 senior outside hitter led the Titans to a 29-2 record and the Class 3 state championship this past season. Ponn amassed 550 kills and 341 digs, including 20 kills in a 3-0 win over Grafton High School in the state title match. She also recorded 69 service aces and 39 assists in addition to posting a .429 kill percentage at net. An American Volleyball Coaches Association Second Team All-American honoree, Ponn concluded her prep volleyball career with state records for kills (2,285) and assists (346).

A member of the Mu Alpha Theta mathematics honor society, Ponn works as a server at the Brambleton Deli in Roanoke. She has volunteered locally as a youth volleyball coach and has also donated her time to multiple community service initiatives through her church. “Caleigh Ponn is the complete package,” said David Keeter, head coach of Grafton High School. “She is the best passer and attacker we faced all season. Our game plan in the state championship was set up to take her out of the game, but she still knew how to get it done.”

Ponn has maintained a weighted 4.15 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play volleyball at Kansas State 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.

Ponn joins recent Gatorade Virginia Volleyball Players of the Year Alexis Keeter (2023-24, Grafton High School), Milan Rex (2022-23, Alexandria City High School), Akasha Anderson (2021-22, Herndon High School) and Amanda Lowe (2020-21, Blacksburg 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](http://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](https://x.com/Gatorade).