

SportsMX/NDIAA

Athletes of the Month

October 2016



John Fetcher IV
Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf

Grade: Senior

Sport: Football

Position: Quarterback

The football team of Minnesota had a rocky start and the team regrouped under John's leadership and poise to reel off five wins in the last six games. During the October stretch, John passed for 680 yards and 14 touchdowns. He also rushed for 176 yards and eight touchdowns. Despite not matching up size-wise against one of their toughest opponents in McGregor, John put in his best performance of the season making snap decisions to keep the offense moving and the game very close. Off the football field, John is actively involved with Academic Bowl, Jr. NAD, and Student Body Government.

"MSAD has been known as a rushing team for years, but John has changed that. I really enjoyed watching him play quarterback and I think he took the reins on offense because his teammates trusted him to lead them." - **Minnesota Athletic Director Lee Jones**

Kathleen Lopez
California School for the Deaf, Riverside

Grade: Senior

Sport: Volleyball

Position: Middle Hitter

As a four-year varsity player, Kathleen has blossomed into an all-around student-athlete through patience and hard work. She also pushes her teammates to challenge themselves as well. Kathleen made her final season a memorable one with season totals of 209 kills, 64 aces, and 17 blocks. She also was recognized as the Player of the Game three times. Kathleen stepped up her game at the SpikeOut tournament earning All-Tournament honors. When not honing her skills on the court, Kathleen is involved with various campus organizations and is the school news anchor on "ASL Today".



"I've always believed that if Kathleen put in the work, the results will come. She doesn't do things half-heartedly because she has 100% heart no matter what happens at the game." - **Riverside Volleyball Head Coach Michelle Skowzgird**

SportsMX/NDIAA

Athletes of the Month

October 2016

Tabitha Spurling

Alabama School for the Deaf

Grade: Senior

Sport: Volleyball

Position: Setter

Recognizing that her setting game needed some work, Tabitha eagerly put in extra time in the gym and eventually emerged into one of the key players for Alabama. With the team playing 13 games in October that included the Mason Dixon tournament and area playoffs, Tabitha put an impressive 89% serving average going for 141 out of 158 serves. She served up 15 aces and averaged 3.0 assists per set. Even though Tabitha's team lost to Mississippi in the thrilling Mason Dixon championship match, she was named the tournament MVP and also was named to Talladega All-County Volleyball first-team.



"Tabitha was such a constant leader. She was the first one in the gym and the last one to leave. She made sure they were all in the gym. She took care of her teammates." – Alabama Volleyball Head Coach Becky Ripley



Mia Upchurch

Texas School for the Deaf

Grade: Senior

Sport: Volleyball

Position: Libero

Mia has made her mark as an invaluable asset for the Texas volleyball program as a libero along with exceptional defense passing skills, which allowed the team to run a more complex offense. Mia set a school single game record of 45 digs against Hill Country Christian of San Marcos and had two other games with 37 and 38 digs. For the month of October, Mia had 171 digs and finished the season with 395 digs in 32 games. She also holds the school's career record for digs with 1,252. Mia was pivotal in bringing home the SpikeOut championship. She was named to SpikeOut All-Tournament team and first-team All-District.

"Mia is a type of player that every coach will love to have on the team, very coachable, plays hard every time whether it's practice or game, follows her instincts very well." - Texas Volleyball Head Coach RJ Kaufman