

**LEGACY OF EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE  
NAMED GATORADE TEXAS BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 6, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Andrew Erickson of Legacy of Educational Excellence High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Texas Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Erickson is the first Gatorade Texas Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Legacy of Educational Excellence High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Erickson as Texas's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Erickson joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook High School, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel High School, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy School of Young Women, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick High School, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West High School, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire High School, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.).

The 5-foot-10, 135-pound junior defensive center midfielder scored seven goals and passed for eight assists this past season, leading the Volunteers (26-3-1) to the Class 6A state championship game. The District 27-6A Most Valuable Player, Erickson helped anchor a defense that recorded 14 shutouts, including in the state final, where Legacy of Educational Excellence High School lost in a shootout to Flower Mound High. He was selected to compete in July's Allstate Cup in Orlando.

Erickson earned the Presidential Volunteer Service Award in 2018 for his service to the San Antonio community. He has donated his time locally at an animal shelter and at Haven for Hope, a homeless shelter. "Andrew has been a thorn in my side for years," said Darnell Barnes, head coach of Theodore Roosevelt High. "He is one of the hardest-working kids on their team and he is a leader. Beyond his skill, which is top notch, he is always communicating, telling his teammates what's coming before it happens. He is a coach on the field."

Erickson has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Kentucky beginning in the fall of 2020.

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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Erickson joins recent Gatorade Texas Boys Soccer Players of the Year Jose Umana (2017-18, Elsie High School), Jose Ortiz (2016-17, Sam Houston High School), Harris Partain (2015-16, Wakeland High School), Isidro Martinez (2014-15, Rivera High School) and Chris Madden (2013-14, Coppell High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Erickson also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [www.Gatorade.com/POY](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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