

ST. PAUL VI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE VIRGINIA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 18, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Taylor Morrell of St. Paul VI Catholic High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Virginia Girls Soccer Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Morrell as Virginia’s best high school girls soccer player, and she joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Mallory Swanson (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colorado), Riley Jackson (2021-22, Blessed Trinity Catholic High School, Georgia) and Addison Halpern (2024-25, Rutgers Preparatory School, New Jersey).

The 5-foot-6 junior midfielder scored 16 goals and passed for eight assists this past season, leading the Panthers (10-5-3) to the Virginia Independent School Athletic Association Division I state tournament championship game. The 2025 United Soccer Coaches National Youth Player of the Year based on her performance with her club team, Morrell did all of her damage for Paul VI in just 11 contests, recording five multi-goal games including two hat tricks. Ranked as the nation’s No. 5 recruit in her class by TopDrawerSoccer.com, she missed eight games while training with the U.S. Soccer Under-17 Women’s National Team, a squad she helped lead earlier this spring in the qualifying stages of the 2026 Under-17 Women’s World Cup.

Morrell has volunteered locally on behalf of Mobile Hope, Tree of Life Ministry, A Forever Home Rescue and Hope Faster. In these capacities, she has helped fight food insecurity for the underserved, served the homeless and assisted on adoption days so rescued dogs can find their forever home. She has also donated her time by creating hygiene care packages for the Mobile Response Center in association with the Catholic Charities Diocese of Arlington. In addition, she’s fundraised for HOPE FASTER to raise awareness and fight childhood cancer as well as helping to host fitness events for young cancer patients. She has also served the Special Olympics and given back as a peer mentor supporting youth with intellectual challenges. “Taylor had an amazing season with PVI,” said Chris Campbell, head coach of St. Paul VI Catholic High School. “She is the best overall soccer player that I’ve seen in a long time. She can score, contribute assists, defend, everything.”

Morrell has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play soccer at The Pennsylvania State University beginning in the fall of 2027.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. 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 winners in each sport.

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 \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 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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