

**WOODROW WILSON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW JERSEY FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 6, 2019) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Fadil Diggs of Woodrow Wilson High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade New Jersey Football Player of the Year. Diggs is the second Gatorade New Jersey Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Woodrow Wilson 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 Diggs as New Jersey's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in December, Diggs joins an elite group of past state football award-winners, including Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06 Highland Park High School, Texas) and Christian McCaffrey (2012-13, 2013-14, Valor Christian High School, Colo.).

The 6-foot-5, 245-pound senior defensive end and wide receiver had led the Tigers to a 9-2 record, the Group 3 South title and a berth in the regional championship game at the time of his selection. Diggs has recorded 93.5 tackles, 17 sacks and five forced fumbles through 11 games, while catching 64 passes for 1,006 yards and 11 touchdowns. A First Team All-State and All-Conference honoree, he has been selected to play in the 2020 Offense-Defense All-American Bowl.

Diggs has served as a student mentor and has volunteered locally on behalf of an elementary school reading initiative and youth football programs. "Fadil Diggs can do anything on a football field," said Brian Bowers, head coach at Delbarton School. "He's a completely dominant player. I've been coaching high school football in New Jersey for 23 years and I'd say he's one of the top three talents I've seen."

Diggs has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at Texas A&M next fall.

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 and 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.

Diggs joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Football Players of the Year Howard Cross (2018-19, St. Joseph Regional High School), Devin Leary (2017-18 & 2016-17, Timber Creek Regional High School), Jordan Fuller (2015-16, Northern Valley Regional High School at Old Tappan) and Brandon Wimbush (2014-15, Saint Peter's Preparatory School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Diggs 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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