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**ARCHBISHOP MURPHY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE WASHINGTON BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 12, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Matt Williams of Archbishop Murphy High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Washington Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Williams is the first Gatorade Washington Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Archbishop Murphy 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 Williams as Washington'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, Williams joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel HS, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick HS, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 5-foot-11, 170-pound senior forward led the Wildcats to a 22-0 record and their third straight Class 2A state championship this past season. Williams scored 37 goals and passed for 19 assists. He tallied three goals and three assists in Archbishop Murphy's 8-0 win over East Valley High School in the state title game, which marked the Wildcats' 42<sup>nd</sup> consecutive win. Williams was the 2016 Class 2A State Player of the Year and is a two-time All-State selection. He concluded his prep soccer career with 92 goals and 47 assists.

The founder of an a cappella club at Archbishop Murphy, Williams has volunteered locally on behalf of Ronald McDonald House charities and as a youth soccer coach. "Matt Williams is a good player," said Cesar Sanchez, head coach of Cedarcrest High School. "I would say that he is dangerous, but even more dangerous on this particular team that got him the ball. He has great soccer instincts and good skills."

Williams has maintained a 3.83 GPA in the classroom. He will attend Washington State University beginning this 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 & 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 work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Williams joins recent Gatorade Washington Boys Soccer Players of the Year Bennett Lehner (2015-16, Camas High School), Wallis Lapsley (2014-15, Lakeside School), Carter Johnson (2013-14 & 2012-13, Skyview High School), Jordan Morris (2011-12, Mercer Island High School), Aaron Kovar (2010-11, Garfield High School), Nick Palodichuk (2009-10, Camas High School), Michael Harris (2008-09, Shorecrest High School), Brent Richards (2007-08, Camas High School), and Brandon Kelley (2006-07, Snohomish High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Matt will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit [www.gatorade.com/poy](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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