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**BELLEVUE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE WASHINGTON GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 19, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Jojo Harber of Bellevue High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Washington Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Harber is the first Gatorade Washington Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Bellevue 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 Harber as Washington's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Harber 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-5 senior forward and midfielder led the Wolverines to a 19-0-2 record and the Class 3A state championship this past season. Harber scored 12 goals and passed for five assists last fall and had the lone scores in both the state semifinals and state title game. A three-time Youth All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America for her club play, Harber was the Class 3A MVP despite missing four games while participating in the Women's International Cup in Belfast, Ireland, with the U.S. Soccer Under-18 Women's National Team.

Harber has volunteered locally as part of multiple community-service initiatives on behalf of both the National Charity League and her church. She has also donated her time at a shelter for homeless women and as a youth soccer coach. "Jojo played at a different level than all of the other girls on the field," said Darryl Gonyea, head coach of Sammamish High School. "The game seems to move in slow motion for her. You always need to account for her because she could hurt you so many different ways."

Harber has maintained a 3.98 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Stanford 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.

Harber joins recent Gatorade Washington Girls Soccer Players of the Year Sam Hiatt (2015-16, Seattle Preparatory School), Kelsey Turnbow (2014-15 & 2013-14, Central Valley High School), Audrey Thomas (2012-13, Issaquah High School), Isabel Farrell (2011-12, Interlake High School), Brooke Gilbert (2010-11, Glacier Peak High School), Lindsay Elston (2009-10, Eastlake High School), Emily Hurd (2008-09, Eastlake High School), and Kate Deines (2007-08 & 2006-07, Issaquah High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Jojo 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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