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ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 18, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Maliah Morris of St. John's College High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Morris is the third Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from St. John's College 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 Morris as District of Columbia'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, Morris 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 (2004-05, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-4 junior forward led the Cadets to a 19-1-1 record and both the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference as well as the District of Columbia State Athletic Association championships this past season. Morris scored 23 goals and passed for 20 assists, including a goal and two assists in a 3-2 overtime win over Sidwell Friends School in the DCSAA tournament final. The Washington Post and the WCAC Player of the Year, she concluded her junior year with 54 goals and 39 assists in her prep soccer career.

Morris has volunteered locally at a homeless shelter and food bank. She has also donated her time by sending care packages to troops overseas in addition to paying for the education of a child in India with her allowance money. "Maliah has the ability to take over games for them," said Amanda Lebo, head coach of Elizabeth Seton School. "I have seen her beat six or seven defenders and put one away at the drop of a hat. She is quick, she is very good on the ball and she has incredible vision."

Morris has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at Clemson University beginning in the fall of 2019.

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.

Two-time winner Morris joins Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Soccer Players of the Year Kaili Gregory (2015-16, Woodrow Wilson High School), Marta Snizek (2014-15, National Cathedral School), Maddie Kulik (2013-14, Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School), Emily Hester (2012-13, National Cathedral School), Kara Wilson (2011-12 & 2010-11, Sidwell Friends School), Taylor Bryant (2009-10, Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School), Bailey Bodell (2008-09, St. John's College High School), and Tiffany McCarty (2007-08, 2006-07 & 2005-06, St. John's College High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Morris 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.

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