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## **KAISER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE HAWAII GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 18, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Kaile Halvorsen of Kaiser High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade Hawaii Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Halvorsen is the first Gatorade Hawaii Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Kaiser 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 Halvorsen as Hawaii'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, Halvorsen 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 5-foot-6 senior forward scored 31 goals and passed for 10 assists this past season, leading the Cougars (13-5) to the Division I state semifinals. Halvorsen recorded six hat tricks and notched at least one goal in all but four games. The 2018 All-Hawaii Girls Soccer Offensive Player of the Year, she concluded her prep soccer career with 62 goals.

Halvorsen has volunteered locally as part of fundraising campaigns to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation and breast cancer research. She has also donated her time as the director of a free soccer camp for underprivileged children. "Kaile made me make special adjustments because she is a dangerous playmaker for herself and her teammates," said Nikki Dela Pena, head coach of Moanalua High. "She has great vision on where to be to create opportunities. I would often have to man-mark her, but her breakaway speed is very hard to defend."

Halvorsen has maintained a 3.98 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Santa Clara University 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.

Halvorsen joins recent Gatorade Hawaii Girls Soccer Players of the Year Emi Higgins (2016-17, Hawaii Preparatory Academy), Sunshine Fontes (2015-16, Pearl City High School), Kristen Hori (2014-15, Iolani School), Kiani Halushka (2013-14, Kamehameha Schools-Kapalama High School), Jill Shimabuku (2012-13, Iolani School), Carly Neal (2011-12, Kamehameha Schools-Kapalama High School), Caprice Dydasco (2010-11, Kamehameha Schools-Kapalama High School), Mari Miyashiro (2009-10, Mililani), Jayann Gabrio (2008-09, Punahou School), Tani Costa (2007-08, Kalani), and Mari Punzal (2006-07, Kamehameha Schools, Kapalama Campus) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Halvorsen 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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