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WALL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEW JERSEY 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 **Amy Paternoster of Wall High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Paternoster is the first Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Wall 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 Paternoster as New Jersey'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, Paternoster 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-3 senior midfielder and forward led the Crimson Knights to a 25-1-1 record and the Group 2 state championship this past season. Paternoster scored 29 goals and passed for 20 assists despite missing the season's final nine games with a foot injury. An All-American selection by United Soccer Coaches and a two-time First Team All-State honoree, Paternoster participated in the High School All-American Game this past December. She concluded her prep soccer career with 94 goals and 53 assists.

Paternoster has volunteered locally with Challengers, a group that teaches disabled children the game of soccer, and on behalf of the Special Olympics. She has also donated her time at homeless shelters and food banks. "Amy simply makes things happen," said Mike Juska, head coach of Wall High. "She works tirelessly to spark the offense, and her attitude and work ethic influence those around her."

Paternoster, who attends the Academy of Allied Health and Science, a vocational school that focuses on medicine, has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to attend Princeton University, where she will play soccer, 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.

Paternoster joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Players of the Year Frankie Tagliaferri (2016-17 & 2015-16, Colts Neck High School), Hana Kerner (2014-15, Northern Highlands Regional High School), Caroline Chagares (2013-14 & 2011-12, Ramapo High School), Clare Shea (2012-13, Northern Highlands Regional High School), Danielle Colaprico (2010-11, Red Bank Catholic High School), Kaitlyn Kerr (2009-10 & 2008-09, The Pennington School), Shannon Mayrose (2007-08, Freehold High School), and Ingrid Wells (2006-07, Montclair High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Paternoster 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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