

Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729-3685)

LA SALLE ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE RHODE ISLAND 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 **Olivia Freitas of La Salle Academy** as its **2017-18 Gatorade Rhode Island Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Freitas is the sixth Gatorade Rhode Island Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from La Salle Academy.

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 Freitas as Rhode Island'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, Freitas 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-4 junior forward led the Rams to a 16-1-1 record and the Division I state championship this past season. Freitas scored 25 goals and passed for 11 assists, including both goals in La Salle's 2-1 win over South Kingstown High in the state final. Freitas also scored the game-winning goal in the state title game as a freshman. An All-American selection by United Soccer Coaches, she concluded her junior year with 52 goals and 26 assists in her prep soccer career.

An accomplished singer, Freitas has been accepted into the Rhode Island Philharmonic Youth Choir. She has also volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach. "Olivia was dominant against everyone," said Mark D'Arezzo, head coach of North Kingstown High. "You stop Olivia, you stop La Salle, which didn't happen much."

Freitas has maintained a weighted A average in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at the College of Charleston, South Carolina, 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.

Freitas joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Girls Soccer Players of the Year Marykate McGuire (2016-17, 2015-16 & 2014-15, Portsmouth High School), Kara Shaw (2013-14, Exeter-West Greenwich High School), Madison Damm (2012-13, North Kingstown High School), McKenzie Meehan (2011-12 & 2010-11, La Salle Academy), Allison Kelley (2009-10 & 2008-09, La Salle Academy), Katie Reilly (2007-08, St. Mary Academy-Bay View), and Erica Florenz (2006-07, Scituate) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Freitas 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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