

MARTIN LUTHER KING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MICHIGAN BOYS FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (December 6, 2018) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Dequan Finn of Martin Luther King High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Michigan Football Player of the Year**. Finn is the first Gatorade Michigan Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Martin Luther King 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 Finn as Michigan's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in December, Finn joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06 Highland Park High School, Texas) and Christian McCaffrey (2012-13, 2013-14, Valor Christian High School, Colo.).

The 6-foot-1, 190-pound senior quarterback passed for 2,109 yards and 25 touchdowns this past season, leading the Crusaders to a 12-2 record and the Division 3 state championship. Finn completed 109 of 188 passes, while also rushing for 1,264 yards and 21 touchdowns on 87 carries. He was selected Michigan's Mr. Football and the MLive Detroit Offensive Player of the Year.

Finn has volunteered locally on behalf of youth sports programs. "He's a great athlete with good size who can hurt you with his arm or his legs," said Jimmy Macon, head coach at Detroit Central High. "Finn is a real field general who makes great decisions, too, and he's a very humble kid too."

Finn has maintained a 3.15 GPA in the classroom. He has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at the University of Toledo next 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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Finn joins recent Gatorade Michigan Football Players of the Year La'Darius Jefferson (2017-18, Muskegon High School), Donovan Peoples-Jones (2016-17, Cass Technical High School), Tony Poljan (2015-16, Lansing Catholic High School), Alex Malzone (2014-15, Brother Rice High School), and Travis Smith (2013-14, Ithaca High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Finn has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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