

**GRANTSBURG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WISCONSIN 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 **Leo Chenal of Grantsburg High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Wisconsin Football Player of the Year**. Chenal is the first Gatorade Wisconsin Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Grantsburg 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 Chenal as Wisconsin'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, Chenal 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-3, 235-pound senior linebacker and running back rushed for 2,038 yards and 42 touchdowns this past season, leading the Pirates (12-1) to the Division 6 state semifinals. Chenal also caught three TD passes and threw for a pair of scores. The Wisconsin Football Coaches Association Small School Offensive and Defensive Player of the Year, Chenal recorded 120 tackles, three fumble recoveries and two interceptions, returning one pick for a TD. He concluded his prep football career with 3,706 rushing yards, 88 total touchdowns and 385 tackles.

An altar boy at his church and a singer in its choir, Chenal has volunteered locally as part of community beautification projects and as a youth football coach. "I have been doing this for about 15 years and I have never seen someone like Leo with such strength, agility and speed," said Corey Nelson, head coach of Unity High. "He is the best all-around football player I have ever seen at the high school level."

Chenal has maintained a 3.81 GPA in the classroom. He has verbally committed to play football on an athletic scholarship at the University of Wisconsin 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. 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.

Chenal joins recent Gatorade Wisconsin Football Players of the Year D.J. Stewart (2017-18, Kimberly High School), Danny Vanden Boom (2016-17, Kimberly High School), Ben Bredeson (2015-16, Arrowhead High School), Alec Ingold (2014-15, Bay Port High School), and Matt Ferris (2013-14, Xavier High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Chenal 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.