

**ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Pablo Gonzalez Rotger of St. Johnsbury Academy** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Vermont Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Gonzalez Rotger is the second Gatorade Vermont Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Johnsbury 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 Gonzalez Rotger as Vermont's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Gonzalez Rotger joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook High School, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel High School, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy School of Young Women, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick High School, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West High School, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire High School, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.).

The 5-foot-4, 145-pound senior forward scored 18 goals and passed for six assists this past season, leading the Hilltoppers (15-2-1) to the Division 1 state finals. A United Soccer Coaches All-American, Gonzalez Rotger was also a First Team All-State honoree and was selected as Player of the Year by the Burlington Free Press and the Caledonian-Record.

A student proctor at his school, Gonzalez Rotger has volunteered locally feeding the homeless and coaching youth soccer players. "Gonzalez Rotger competes at a super high level," said Jake Orr, head coach of Essex High. "He has an incredible ability to find space in the box and he's a very good finisher."

Gonzalez Rotger has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. He will attend Virginia Tech this fall, where he will play soccer.

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.

Gonzalez Rotger joins recent Gatorade Vermont Boys Soccer Players of the Year Patrick O'Hara (2017-18 & 2016-17, South Burlington High School), Leland Gazo (2015-16, Rice Memorial High School), Aiman Ginawi (2014-15, South Burlington High School) and Zack Evans (2013-14, Champlain Valley Union High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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