

## MANCHESTER CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEW HAMPSHIRE GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

**CHICAGO** (June 13, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Paige LaBerge of Manchester Central High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. LaBerge is the third Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Manchester Central 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 LaBerge as New Hampshire'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, LaBerge 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 for Young Women, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick High School, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-05, 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-10 senior forward led the Little Green to a 17-2 record and a second-straight Division I state championship this past season. LaBerge recorded 21 goals and 13 assists, including two of each in Central's 5-0 win over Londonderry High in the state final. A three-time First Team All-State selection, LaBerge was also a two-time United Soccer Coaches All-American honoree. She concluded her prep soccer career with 72 goals and 26 assists.

LaBerge has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach. "Paige combined physical play with a ton of skill on the ball," said Matt Bryant, head coach of Windham High. "She helped Central put the [state] final out of reach in the first 10 minutes. She was the best player on the field in the most important moments."

LaBerge maintained a 3.47 GPA in the classroom. Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, LaBerge inked a financial-aid agreement that paved the way for her to enroll at Florida State University, where she will play soccer. She graduated from high school in December and recently completed her first semester at Florida State.

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.

LaBerge joins recent Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Soccer Players of the Year Brianna CoCo (2017-18, Bedford High School), Bailey Kolinski (2016-17, Brewster Academy) and Gabi Brummett (2015-16, 2014-15 & 2013-14, The Derryfield School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," LaBerge also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She 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](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](https://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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