

## LA SALLE ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE RHODE ISLAND 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 **Olivia Freitas of La Salle Academy** as its **2018-19 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 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 state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-4 senior forward led the Rams to an 18-0 record and a second-straight Division I state championship this past season. Freitas recorded 17 goals and 10 assists, including one helper in La Salle's 3-0 win over Smithfield High in the state title game. A two-time United Soccer Coaches All-American selection, Freitas participated in the High School All-American Game. She concluded her prep soccer career with 69 goals and 36 assists.

Freitas has volunteered locally at the Leviton Dual Language School in Providence and as a youth soccer coach. "Olivia is a leader on the field," said Chris Allen, head coach of Lincoln High. "She also has the skill to be a game-changing player on the field."

Freitas has maintained a weighted A average in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the College of Charleston this 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.

Two-time winner Freitas joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Girls Soccer Players of the Year Olivia Freitas (2017-18, La Salle Academy), Marykate McGuire (2016-17, 2015-16 & 2014-15, Portsmouth High School) and Kara Shaw (2013-14, Exeter-West Greenwich High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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