

J.L. MANN ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 13, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Caroline Conti of J.L. Mann Academy** as its **2018-19 Gatorade South Carolina Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Conti is the third Gatorade South Carolina Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from J.L. Mann 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 Conti as South Carolina'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, Conti 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.).

Also the state's 2016-17 Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-6 senior forward led the Patriots to a 27-1 record and a third-straight Class AAAAA state championship this past season. Conti scored 32 goals, passed for 44 assists and recorded at least two points in 18 games. A four-time First Team All-State selection, Conti was the 2017-18 Class AAAAA Miss Soccer Player of the Year. She concluded her prep soccer career with 102 goals and 82 assists.

The senior class vice president of student council, Conti has volunteered locally with the Special Olympics and as a youth soccer coach. "Caroline is the real deal—she's a triple threat: technical, fast and great soccer IQ," said Kelsey Geary, head coach of Clover High. "Her ability to make adjustments to her game when she's being man-marked or double-teamed is on another level."

Conti has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Clemson University 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 Conti joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Girls Soccer Players of the Year Riane Coman (2017-18, Academic Magnet High School), Kasey Parker (2015-16 & 2014-15, Dreher High School) and Jeni Erickson (2013-14, J.L. Mann Academy) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Conti 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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