

HOUSTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE TENNESSEE 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 **Cara Young of Houston High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Tennessee Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Young is the third Gatorade Tennessee Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Houston 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 Young as Tennessee'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, Young 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-7 senior forward and midfielder led the Mustangs to a 21-2 record and a second-straight Class AAA state championship this past season. Young recorded 16 goals and 14 assists, including the lone score in Houston's 1-0 win over Collierville High in the state title game. A United Soccer Coaches All-American selection, Young participated in the High School All-American Game. She concluded her prep soccer career with 39 goals and 34 assists.

Young has volunteered locally with Mission of Mercy, providing dental care to those in need, and for Locks of Love. "Cara has moved to several different positions during her high school career and she did it willingly and did it well," said Alexis Heinz, head coach of Briarcrest Christian High. "She works hard in the attack and very hard to get back on defense."

Young maintained a weighted 3.38 GPA in the classroom. Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, Young inked a financial-aid agreement that paved the way for her to enroll at the University of Arkansas, where she will play soccer. She graduated from high school in December and recently completed her first semester at Arkansas.

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.

Young joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Girls Soccer Players of the Year Jenna Kemp (2017-18, Houston High School), Karlie Paschall (2016-17, Ravenwood High School), Gabby Little (2015-16, Houston High School), Karlie Paschall (2014-15, Ravenwood High School) and Josie Jennings (2013-14, Farragut High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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