

ST. JOSEPH CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA 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 **McKenzie Moran of St. Joseph Central Catholic High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade West Virginia Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Moran is the first Gatorade West Virginia Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Joseph Central Catholic 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 Moran as West Virginia'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, Moran 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-5 senior forward and midfielder scored 40 goals and passed for 20 assists this past season, leading the Irish (19-4) to the Class AA-A regional tournament semifinals. The West Virginia High School Soccer Coaches Association Class AA-A Player of the Year, Moran participated in the High School All-American Game. She concluded her prep soccer career with 135 goals and 80 assists.

A four-time state individual champion as a member of the St. Joseph track and field team, Moran has volunteered locally as part of a fundraising campaign to benefit a non-profit organization that provides physical, occupational and speech therapy to special-needs children. She is also the vice president of her school's student body and president of its National Honor Society chapter. "McKenzie's presence and command inspired her teammates and really provided a sense of confidence that I believe they would not have had without her," said Amy Mullen, head coach of Charleston Catholic High. "She has the ability to play up top as well as control the middle of the pitch. You had to know where she was at all times."

Moran has maintained a weighted 4.06 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Gonzaga 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.

Moran joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Girls Soccer Players of the Year Emilie Charles (2017-18, Cabell Midland High School), Mary Lawman (2016-17, Winfield High School), Jordan Pauley (2015-16, Winfield High School) and Jayne Lawman (2014-15 & 2013-14, Winfield High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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