

## **ST. FRANCES ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MARYLAND FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (December 6, 2019) — In its 35<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Blake Corum of St. Frances Academy** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Maryland Football Player of the Year**. Corum is the first Gatorade Maryland Football Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Frances 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 Corum as Maryland's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in December, Corum joins an elite group of past state football award-winners, including Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06 Highland Park High School, Texas) and Christian McCaffrey (2012-13, 2013-14, Valor Christian High School, Colo.).

The 5-foot-9, 200-pound senior running back rushed for 1,438 yards and 22 touchdowns on 172 carries this past season, leading the Panthers to an 11-1 record and a No. 4 national ranking by MaxPreps. Corum also caught 13 passes for 226 yards and three touchdowns this fall. He has been selected to play in the 2020 Under Armour All-America Game.

A devoted member of his church community, Corum has volunteered locally on behalf of the Salvation Army and youth sports programs. "Blake Corum is by far the best back we've played against this season and, actually, in recent memory," said Bruce Rollinson, head coach at Mater Dei (Calif.) High. "His toughness, vision and breakaway speed are what makes for highlight films."

Corum has maintained a 3.27 GPA in the classroom. He has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at the University of Michigan next 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 and 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.

Corum joins recent Gatorade Maryland Football Players of the Year Bryan Bresee (2018-19, Damascus High School), Anthony Lytton Jr. (2017-18, Dr. Henry A. Wise, Jr. High School), Travis Levy (2016-17, Sherwood High School), Jake Funk (2015-16, Damascus High School) and Dwayne Haskins (2014-15, Bullis School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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

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