

**CHAPMAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 6, 2019) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Mikele Colasurdo of Chapman High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade South Carolina Football Player of the Year**. Colasurdo is the first Gatorade South Carolina Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Chapman 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 Colasurdo as South Carolina'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, Colasurdo 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 6-foot-1, 210-pound senior quarterback had led the Panthers (14-0) to a berth in the Class AAA state championship game at the time of his selection. Colasurdo passed for 2,855 yards and 35 touchdowns through 14 games. He also rushed for 393 yards and 14 scores. An All-State selection as a junior, he entered the state final with 71 touchdown passes and 25 rushing scores in his prep football career.

A member of the Chapman High School student council, Colasurdo has volunteered locally with the Carolina Miracle League, and has donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church. "Mikele is a great football player and an even better person," said Lynn Fleming, head coach of Broome High School. "He has grown so much as a player. He makes their offense go."

Colasurdo has maintained a weighted 4.45 GPA in the classroom. Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, Colasurdo has inked a financial-aid agreement that will pave the way for him to enroll at Georgia State University. He will graduate from high school this month and attend classes in the spring semester.

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.

Colasurdo joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Football Players of the Year Zacch Pickens (2018-19, T.L. Hanna High School), Derion Kendrick (2017-18, South Pointe High School), Dakereon Joyner (2016-17, Fort Dorchester High School), Austin Scott (2015-16, Spartanburg High School) and J.J. Arcega-Whiteside (2014-15, Dorman High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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