

**MCDONOGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MARYLAND GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 17, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Baylee DeSmit of McDonogh School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Maryland Girls Soccer Player of the Year. DeSmit is the fifth Gatorade Maryland Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from McDonogh 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 DeSmit as Maryland'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, DeSmit joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, 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 of 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 junior forward led the Eagles to a 16-1 record and the IAAM Class A state championship this past season. DeSmit compiled 20 goals and 11 assists, including a pair of scores in McDonogh's 3-1 win over Archbishop Spalding High in the state final. DeSmit was named Player of the Year by the Baltimore Sun, the Varsity Sports Network and the Maryland Association of Coaches of Soccer. She concluded her junior year with 52 goals and 28 assists in her prep soccer career.

DeSmit has volunteered locally as a mentor through Acts4Youth, and she has donated her time as a summer camp counselor. "Baylee is by far the best forward in the state," said Joie Gill, head coach of St. Paul's School for Girls. "She worked hard off the ball, which helped her to create space for her to run into and get in behind my defense. She is also so fast that my team had a hard time keeping up with her."

DeSmit has maintained a 3.76 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at Loyola (Md.) University beginning in the fall of 2021.

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. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

DeSmit joins recent Gatorade Maryland Girls Soccer Players of the Year Ada Clare Tempert (2018-19, Mercy High School), Abbey Burdette (2017-18, Urbana High School), Cammie Murtha (2016-17, Walter Johnson High School), Kia Rankin (2015-16, McDonogh School), Bridgette Andrzejewski (2014-15, McDonogh School), and Imani Dorsey (2013-14, Our Lady of Good Counsel High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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.