

**BURR & BURTON ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE VERMONT GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 17, 2020) — In its 35<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Grace Pinkus of Burr & Burton Academy as its 2019-20 Gatorade Vermont Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Pinkus is the second Gatorade Vermont Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Burr & Burton 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 Pinkus as Vermont'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, Pinkus 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 senior forward and midfielder scored 23 goals and passed for nine assists this past season, leading the Bulldogs (11-4) to the Division 1 state quarterfinals. A United Soccer Coaches All-American, Pinkus is a four-time All-Conference selection and was named to the Burlington Free Press All-State First Team.

Pinkus has served as a peer mentor and has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and youth sports programs. "Grace Pinkus is a physical presence on the field and she's one of the smartest players I've seen," said Lori McClallen, head coach at Rutland High School. "She's a fierce competitor and she's very dangerous in the attacking third."

Pinkus has maintained a weighted 4.71 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer at the University of Massachusetts.

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.

Pinkus joins recent Gatorade Vermont Girls Soccer Players of the Year Tess Belnap (2018-19, Arlington Memorial High School), Natalie Durieux (2017-18, Champlain Valley Union High School), Georgia Lord (2016-17, Burr & Burton Academy), Abby McKearin (2015-16, Proctor High School), Madison Feeney (2014-15, Burlington High School), and Katie Stames (2013-14, Peoples Academy) 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](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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