

**CHANTILLY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 Aria Nagai of Chantilly High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Virginia Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Nagai is the first Gatorade Virginia Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Chantilly 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 Nagai as 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, Nagai 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-3 senior defender and midfielder is a member of the Japanese Junior Women's National Team. Nagai was a First Team All-State selection and earned Second Team All-Met recognition from the Washington Post as a junior. Ranked as the nation's No. 106 recruit in the Class of 2020 by TopDrawerSoccer.com, she has also trained with the Professional Development Program team of the National Women's Soccer League's Washington Spirit franchise.

The sports editor of her school newspaper, Nagai has volunteered locally as a peer tutor in English and math, and she has donated her time as a youth soccer coach. "Aria Nagai is an incredible player," said Devon Dowell, head coach of James Madison High School. "She has tremendous speed and versatility on the field in any position. She was a key player for Chantilly all her years there and one of the girls we always had to plan around."

Nagai has maintained a weighted 4.41 GPA in the classroom. She will attend Princeton University, where she will play soccer.

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.

Nagai joins recent Gatorade Virginia Girls Soccer Players of the Year Julia Leas (2018-19, James Madison High School), Claire Constant (2017-18 & 2016-17, T.C. Williams High School), Tess Sapone (2015-16, Oakton High School), Kristina Diana (2014-15, South County High School), and Katie Cousins (2013-14, Jefferson Forest 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.