

**CATHOLIC MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 13, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Owen McGowan of Catholic Memorial High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Massachusetts Football Player of the Year. McGowan is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Catholic Memorial 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 McGowan as Massachusetts's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in May, McGowan 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, 230-pound senior linebacker, running back and emergency quarterback led the Knights to a 4-0 record during an abbreviated spring season. McGowan recorded 45 tackles, two sacks, one interception and one forced fumble on defense. As a signal-caller, he passed for 161 yards and two touchdowns while rushing for 222 yards and another two scores. The 2019 Catholic Conference MVP and both a Boston Globe and Boston Herald All-Scholastic selection, he concluded his prep football career with 362 tackles and 12 touchdowns.

McGowan has volunteered locally as a peer tutor and as a lifeguard at a senior center. "Without Owen's leadership and his athletic ability, they would not have been undefeated," said Al Fornaro, head coach of Xaverian High. "He put the team ahead of himself, showing what a true leader is."

McGowan has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play football on scholarship at Boston College this 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 & 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 works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

McGowan joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Football Players of the Year Kalel Mullings (2019-20, Milton Academy), Mike Sainristil (2018-19, Everett High School), Sal Frelick (2017-18, Lexington High School), and Bobby Maimaron (2016-17, Duxbury High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," McGowan has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. McGowan is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com, on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

###