

**WARREN TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ILLINOIS BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 11, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Max Floriani of Warren Township High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Illinois Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Floriani is the second Gatorade Illinois Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Warren Township 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 Floriani as Illinois best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Floriani 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 6-foot-2, 178-pound senior defender led the Blue Devils to a 15-0 record and the North Suburban Conference Tournament championship this past season. A 2019 First Team All-State selection, Floriani scored four goals and passed for four assists and recorded a point in all three of Warren's postseason matches. He participated in last month's High School All-American Game and led a Warren Township defense that allowed just five goals and posted 11 shutouts.

Floriani has volunteered locally at Freedom USA, an organization that promotes literacy in the United States. He has also donated his time at a local food pantry and with Feed My Starving Children. "Max is a rare package," said Jason Ahonen, head coach of Warren Township High. "[He has] the physical attributes of height and strength, the individual skill set from a technical aspect and the mental strength of persevering through life's challenges."

Floriani has maintained a weighted 3.81 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at St. Louis University 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.

Floriani joins recent Gatorade Illinois Boys Soccer Players of the Year Jack Finnegan (2019-20, Brother Rice High School), Colin Iverson (2018-19, Naperville North High School), Tommy Welch (2017-18, Naperville North High School), and Chris Sullivan (2016-17, Naperville North High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Floriani has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Floriani 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.

###