

**LONGMEADOW HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS 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 Andrew Ortiz of Longmeadow High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Ortiz is the second Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Longmeadow 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 Ortiz as Massachusetts' 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, Ortiz 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-10, 170-pound senior midfielder led the Lancers to a 5-1 record this past season, which was abbreviated by pandemic concerns. A 2020 United Soccer Coaches All-New England Region selection, Ortiz also led Longmeadow to the 2019 Division 1 state championship. A two-time All-Western Mass First Team honoree, he concluded his prep soccer career with 20 goals and 25 assists.

A member of Longmeadow High's chapter of the Business Professionals of America, Ortiz has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach, and he has donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church. "Andrew is an all-around player who consistently makes those around him better," said Brad Miller, head coach of Longmeadow High. "He often sacrifices his offensive contributions by helping the team defensively. He has natural defensive instincts, excellent positional awareness and a high level of technical ability."

Ortiz has maintained a weighted 3.50 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Massachusetts 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.

Ortiz joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Soccer Players of the Year Khamari Hadaway (2019-20, Northfield Mount Hermon School), Jacob Shaffelburg (2018-19 & 2017-18, Berkshire School), and Jake LaBranche (2016-17, Nauset Regional High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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

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