

**ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CONNECTICUT GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 15, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Maddie Fried of St. Joseph High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Connecticut Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Fried is the fourth Gatorade Connecticut Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Joseph 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 Fried as Connecticut'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, Fried 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 led the Cadets to a 10-1-1 record this past season. Fried scored 15 goals and passed for 15 assists and recorded multiple points in eight of 12 games. A two-time Connecticut Girls Soccer Coaches Association Player of the Year, she is also a two-time United Soccer Coaches High School All-American selection. Also a four-time All-State honoree, she concluded her prep soccer career with 83 goals and 54 assists.

A student ambassador at St. Joseph High, Fried has volunteered locally as part of multiple community service activities through her church. "Maddie Fried is a special player," said Tom Cunningham, head coach of Fairfield Warde High. "She makes everyone around her better. And she has done it consistently over the last four years. As a coach, you are forced to make adjustments to your game plan when going against her."

Fried has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Villanova 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.

Fried joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Girls Soccer Players of the Year Chloe Landers (2019-20, Glastonbury High School), Meadow Mancini (2018-19, Watertown High School), Lauren Hinton (2017-18, Loomis Chaffee School), and Danielle Brinckman (2016-17, Glastonbury High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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