

**KING KEKAULIKE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE HAWAII 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 Teani Arakawa of King Kekaulike High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Hawaii Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Arakawa is the first Gatorade Hawaii Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from King Kekaulike 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 Arakawa as Hawaii'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, Arakawa 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-1 senior midfielder concluded her prep career with school records for career goals (51) and career assists (28). The state's returning Gatorade Girls Soccer Player of the Year, Arakawa was a two-time Maui Interscholastic League Player of the Year and was a Honolulu Star-Advertiser All-State First Team honoree. As a junior, she scored 18 goals and passed for 13 assists and was named the ScoringLive Offensive Player of the Year.

Arakawa has volunteered locally on behalf of stadium-beautification efforts, the Makawao Elementary School and the Waipoli Hydroponic Greens farm. "Teani matured into a great captain for our team, using her voice and her example of play in the field," said King Kekaulike coach Gundi Dancil. "She plays with a very high work ethic and continues to build her skill as far as being a complete player."

Arakawa has maintained a 3.96 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at South Dakota State 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.

Two-time winner Arakawa joins recent Gatorade Hawaii Girls Soccer Players of the Year Sunshine Fontes (2018-19, Pearl City High School), Kaile Halvorsen (2017-18, Kaiser High School), and Emi Higgins (2016-17, Hawaii Preparatory Academy), among the state's list of former award winners.

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

###