

**MARS AREA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA 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 Ellie Coffield of Mars Area High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Coffield is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Mars Area 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 Coffield as Pennsylvania'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, Coffield 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 state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-7 senior midfielder led the Fightin' Planets to a 19-0 record and a second-straight Class 3A state championship this past season. Coffield recorded 25 goals and 39 assists. A two-time First Team All-State selection, she was the 2020 Pennsylvania Soccer Coaches Association Player of the Year and a United Soccer Coaches High School All-American. She concluded her prep soccer career with 95 goals and 104 assists.

Coffield has volunteered locally on behalf of her family-run The Cure for Cancer Soccer Foundation, which raises funds to benefit pediatric cancer research. She has also donated her time at a prom for special-needs students and as a youth soccer and basketball coach. "Ellie is always the hardest-working player in the room," said Steve Perri, head coach of Butler High. "Ellie stands out during any game. She is constantly on the ball and dictating tempo. She breaks out of pressure on the dribble and on the pass. She is a goal scorer and a defender."

Coffield has maintained a weighted 4.27 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Pittsburgh 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 Coffield joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Soccer Players of the Year Camryn Lexow (2018-19, Abington High School), Delaney Snyder (2017-18, Moon Area High School), and Murphy Agnew (2016-17, Villa Joseph Marie High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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