

**CHAMINADE-MADONNA PREP STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE FLORIDA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 7, 2021) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kenyatta Jackson of Chaminade-Madonna Prep** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Florida Football Player of the Year**. Jackson is the first Gatorade Florida Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Chaminade-Madonna Prep.

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 Jackson as Florida's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in December, Jackson joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners, including Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Christian McCaffrey (2012-13 & 2013-14, Valor Christian High School, Colo.).

The 6-foot-5, 231-pound senior defensive end had led the Lions to a 9-1 record and a berth in the Class 3A semifinals at the time of his selection. Jackson recorded 55 tackles through 10 games, including 14 sacks, 17 tackles for a loss and 15 quarterback hurries. A two-time All-County honoree, he has been selected to play in the 2022 Under Armour All-America Game.

Jackson has volunteered locally on behalf of a football camp for children with disabilities. "Kenyatta Jackson is an elite pass-rusher with tremendous length," said Dave Dunn, head coach at Columbus High School. "He was the best player we faced the whole season and also the best player we saw on film."

Jackson has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play football on scholarship at Ohio State University next 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Jackson joins recent Gatorade Florida Football Players of the Year James Williams (2020-21, American Heritage High School), Derek Wingo (2019-20, St. Thomas Aquinas High School), Marcus Crowley (2018-19, Trinity Christian Academy), and Lorenzo Lingard (2017-18, University High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Jackson has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Jackson is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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