

**CENTURY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NORTH DAKOTA 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 **Lucas Schweigert of Century High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year**. Schweigert is the third Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Century 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 Schweigert as North Dakota'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, Schweigert 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, 270-pound senior offensive and defensive lineman recorded 89 tackles and two sacks this past season, leading the Patriots (9-2) to the Class 11AA semifinals. Schweigert fueled a defense that allowed just 7.5 points per game and posted four shutouts. He also helped pave the way for an offense that averaged 27.6 points and 177.9 yards rushing per game. The Class AA Senior Football Athlete of the Year, Schweigert is a three-time First Team All-State selection.

Schweigert has volunteered locally on behalf of the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, the Designer Genes Walk for down syndrome awareness and youth hockey and football programs. "I don't know that there's been a consistently more dominant defensive lineman than Lucas Schweigert," said Chris Clements, head coach at Legacy High School. "If you run away from him, he'll run it down; if you run at him, he'll blow it up. You have to know where he is all the time. He's also a very, very good offensive lineman."

Schweigert has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play football on scholarship at the University of North Dakota 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.

Schweigert joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Football Players of the Year Andrew Leingang (2020-21, Century High School), Oscar Benson (2019-20, Hillsboro-Central Valley High School), Will Madler (2018-19, Bismarck High School), and Andy Gravdahl (2017-18, West Fargo 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, Schweigert 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. Schweigert 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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