

**CLASSICAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE RHODE ISLAND 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 **Marquis Buchanan of Classical High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Rhode Island Football Player of the Year**. Buchanan is the second Gatorade Rhode Island Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Classical 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 Buchanan as Rhode Island'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, Buchanan 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-4, 175-pound senior wide receiver and defensive back led the Purple to a 10-2 record and the Division II state championship this past season. Buchanan caught 63 passes for 1,143 yards and 10 touchdowns, and also rushed for 399 yards and eight scores. He returned two kickoffs and one punt for TDs and threw a touchdown pass. Defensively, the two-time First Team All-State selection totaled 75 tackles and five interceptions, returning three for scores. He also reached the end zone on a fumble return.

Buchanan has volunteered locally as a youth mentor at the Davey Lopes Recreation Center in Providence for the past seven years, and he has donated his time at a homeless shelter and food bank. "When you play against Marquis Buchanan, you have to gear your whole defense around him," said Jason DeLawrence, head coach of Tolman High School. "He could do anything on the football field. His size and athletic ability were unmatched on the field. No one could guard him 1-on-1 in the state."

Buchanan has maintained a 3.0 GPA in the classroom as an upperclassman. He remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Buchanan joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Football Players of the Year Sam Baddoo (2020-21, Classical High School), James Osanski (2019-20, North Kingstown High School), Dylan Poirier (2018-19, North Kingstown High School), and Will Such (2017-18, Cranston High School West), 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, Buchanan 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. Buchanan 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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