

GRAHAM-KAPOWSIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE WASHINGTON 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 **Josh Wood of Graham-Kapowsin High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Washington Football Player of the Year**. Wood is the first Gatorade Washington Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Graham-Kapowsin 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 Wood as Washington'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, Wood 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-3, 190-pound senior quarterback led the Eagles to a 14-0 record and the Class 4A state championship this past season. Wood passed for 2,228 yards and 33 touchdowns and also rushed for 612 yards and 10 scores, averaging 10.7 yards per carry. The South Puget Sound League Offensive Most Valuable Player, he is a two-time All-League quarterback.

A member of the Graham-Kapowsin High Student Leadership Committee, Wood has volunteered locally as a youth football and basketball coach, and he has donated his time to A Step Ahead Pierce County, which supports families with infants and toddlers experiencing developmental delays or disabilities. "Josh is a dynamic, do-it-all quarterback," said Keith Ross, head coach of Sumner High School. "He is long, athletic, fast and calm. He can hurt you in all phases. He is truly one of the most dynamic quarterbacks that I have ever coached against."

Wood has maintained a 3.59 GPA in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to play football on scholarship at Eastern Washington 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.

Wood joins recent Gatorade Washington Football Players of the Year Sam Huard (2020-21, Kennedy Catholic High School), Emeka Egbuka (2019-20, Steilacoom High School), Jacob Holcomb (2018-19, Puyallup High School), and Isaiah Ifanse (2017-18, Bellevue 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, Wood 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. Wood 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.

