

**BENTONVILLE WEST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ARKANSAS GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June, 23, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kate Carter** of **Bentonville West High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Arkansas Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Carter is the first Gatorade Arkansas Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Bentonville West 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 Carter as Arkansas' 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, Carter 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 5-foot-6 junior forward and defender scored 16 goals and passed for 11 assists this past season, leading the Wolverines (18-6) to the Class 6A state championship. A United Soccer Coaches All-American, Carter was selected to the All-Arkansas Preps First Team. She was also named to the All-State Tournament Team.

A devoted member of her church's youth ministry, Carter has volunteered locally on behalf of a food pantry and toy-donation drives. "Kate Carter was the most dangerous player on the field," said Gena McGee, head coach at Har-Ber High. "Her speed really set her apart from the rest. She's also a very patient player, the definition of calm. She never seemed frantic when she played."

Carter has maintained a weighted 4.14 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Carter joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Girls Soccer Players of the Year Sophie Nash (2020-21, North Little Rock High School), Kailyn 'KK' Pavatt (2019-20 & 2018-19, Conway High School), and Skylurr Patrick (2017-18, Rogers 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, Carter 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. Carter 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.