

**BELLEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MICHIGAN FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 3, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Bryce Underwood** of **Belleville High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Michigan Football Player of the Year**. Underwood is the first Gatorade Michigan Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Belleville High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Underwood as Michigan’s best high school football player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.), Peyton Manning (1993-94, Isidore Newman School, La.) and Jackson Arnold (2022-23, John H. Guyer High School, Texas).

The 6-foot-3, 215-pound junior quarterback passed for 3,329 yards and 41 touchdowns this past season, completing 64.9 percent of his attempts and throwing just 3 interceptions while leading the Tigers (13-1) to the Division 1 state title game. Rated as the nation’s No. 1 prospect in the Class of 2025 by 247Sports, ESPN and On3 ELITE, Underwood also rushed for 199 yards and seven touchdowns, gaining 6.6 yards per carry. A finalist for Mr. Football in Michigan and a two-time state champion, he was the MaxPreps 2021-22 Freshman and 2022-23 Sophomore National Player of the Year.

Underwood has volunteered locally at Detroit’s Capuchin Soup Kitchen during the holiday season and has also donated his time with his team washing cars and serving food at Culver’s Restaurant. He has also served as a youth football instructor and coach. “Bryce Underwood will likely go down as one of the greatest quarterbacks in the history of high school football in Michigan,” said Greg Wickliffe of MLive-The Ann Arbor News. “His junior season was just as impressive as his first two campaigns as he led Belleville to a 13-1 record and a third-straight championship appearance. He was the most consistent player this season with more than 40 touchdown passes to only three interceptions.”

Underwood has maintained a 3.18 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his 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.

Underwood joins recent Gatorade Michigan Football Players of the Year Dante Moore (2022-23, Martin Luther King Jr. Senior High School), Josh Burnham (2021-22, Traverse City Central High School), Donovan Edwards (2020-21, West Bloomfield High School), and Cameron Martinez (2019-20, Muskegon High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade’s commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners’ grants have totaled more than \$4.9 million across more than 1,600 organizations.

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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