

**YORKTOWN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 **Shay Montgomery** of **Yorktown High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Virginia Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Montgomery is the first Gatorade Virginia Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Yorktown 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 Montgomery as Virginia's 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, Montgomery 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 state's returning Gatorade Girls Soccer Player of the Year, 5-foot-9 senior midfielder and forward led the Patriots to a 21-1-1 record and the Class 6 state championship this past season. Montgomery scored 24 goals and passed for eight assists with eight multi-goal games. A two-time First Team All-State selection, Montgomery is ranked as the nation's No. 42 recruit in the Class of 2022 by TopDrawerSoccer.com. She concluded her two-year prep soccer career with 44 goals and 20 assists.

An award-winning poet, Montgomery has volunteered locally as a peer mentor and youth soccer coach. "Shay is a playmaker who can change the dynamic and momentum of games," said Hannah Davis, head coach of Yorktown High School. "Her ability to take players on and find open teammates is unmatched. Her ability to score from nearly impossible angles is like nothing I've seen before."

Montgomery has maintained a weighted 4.38 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at the University of South Carolina beginning in the fall of 2022.

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.

Two-time winner Montgomery joins recent Gatorade Virginia Girls Soccer Players of the Year Aria Nagai (2019-20, Chantilly High School), Julia Leas (2018-19, James Madison High School), and Claire Constant (2017-18, T.C. Williams 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, Montgomery 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. Montgomery 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.