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GATORADE® NATIONAL SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR: MEGAN FARAIMO

Two-time Olympic Softball Pitcher Jennie Finch Surprises Winner with Honor

San Diego, Calif. (June 7, 2017) – In its 33rd year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Megan Faraimo of Cathedral Catholic High School (San Diego, Calif.) as its 2017-18 Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year. Faraimo was surprised with the news by two-time Olympic softball pitcher Jennie Finch.

Check out the surprise video [here](#).

"Megan is a superb talent who will certainly make an immediate impact at UCLA next year," says Derek Allister, owner of OnDeckSoftball Scouting/Recruiting Service. "Her combination of velocity, spin rate and command are second to none. Behind her quiet exterior, she is a relentless competitor. When you add all that up, you have the makings for one of the next great pitchers in collegiate softball."

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 Faraimo as the nation’s best high school softball player. A national advisory panel comprised of sport-specific experts and sports journalists helped select Faraimo from nearly 360,000 high school softball players nationwide. Faraimo is now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade Female High School Athlete of the Year award, to be presented at a special ceremony prior to The ESPY Awards in July.

The 6-foot-1 senior right-handed pitcher compiled a 26-3 record in the circle with a 0.23 ERA this past season, leading the Dons (26-4) to the San Diego Section Open Division championship game. Faraimo struck out 405 batters—the second-highest single-season total in CIF San Diego Section history—while surrendering just 47 hits and issuing eight walks in 186.1 innings pitched. She fired 17 shutouts with five no-hitters, including four perfect games. At the plate, Faraimo produced a .316 batting average with seven home runs, 22 RBI and a .645 slugging percentage. Ranked as the No. 1 recruit in the Class of 2018 by FloSoftball, she concluded her prep softball career with 1,028 strikeouts.

Faraimo has maintained a weighted 3.49 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball on scholarship at UCLA this fall.

"Megan is an excellent student-athlete who has earned recognition as the nation’s best high school softball player while also excelling in the classroom and making a difference in her community," said Gatorade Senior Vice President and General Manager Brett O’Brien. "Megan’s statistics on the field speak for themselves, but even more

impressive is the example she sets for younger student-athletes and the impact she has had on her teammates. Megan represents everything we look to celebrate in a Gatorade Player of the Year recipient.”

As a part of Gatorade’s cause marketing platform “Play it Forward,” Faraimo also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She is also eligible to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for her organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

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 high school sports leadership team in partnership with the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Former notable Gatorade National Players of the Year include:

- Super Bowl Most Valuable Player Peyton Manning
- 2015 NBA first overall pick Karl-Anthony Towns
- Three-time WNBA champion Maya Moore
- Seven-time track & field gold medalist Allyson Felix
- Three-time beach volleyball gold medalist Kerri Walsh
- Three-time Cy Young Award winner Clayton Kershaw

For more information on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of former winners, and future announcement dates, visit the Gatorade Player of the Year Web site at <http://www.gatorade.com/poy>, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

ALL-TIME GATORADE NATIONAL SOFTBALL PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

YEAR	NAME	HIGH SCHOOL	STATUS
2017-18	Megan Faraimo	Cathedral Catholic High School, San Diego, CA	UCLA
2016-17	Taylor Dockins	Norco High School, Norco, CA	Cal State Fullerton
2015-16	Madilyn Nickles	Merced High School, Merced, CA	UCLA
2014-15	Rachel Garcia	Highland HS, Palmdale, CA	UCLA
2013-14	Taylor McQuillin	Mission Viejo, Mission Viejo, CA	University of Arizona
2012-13	Carley Hoover	D.W. Daniel HS, Central, SC	LSU Grad.
2011-12	Gerri Ann Glasco	Oconee County, Watkinsville, GA	Akron Racers
2010-11	Paige McDuffee	The Woodlands, The Woodlands, TX	UCLA Grad.
2009-10	Kasey Fagan	Dunnellon, Dunnellon, FL	Arkansas Grad.
2008-09	Kenzie Fowler	Canyon del Oro, Oro Valley, AZ	NCAA Softball Analyst
2007-08	Kenzie Fowler	Canyon del Oro, Oro Valley, AZ	NCAA Softball Analyst
2006-07	Ashley Brignac	John Curtis Christian School, River Ridge, LA	UL – Lafayette Grad.
2005-06	Kirsten Shortridge	Keller, Keller, TX	LSU Grad.
2004-05	Dani Hofer	Palm Harbor University, Palm Harbor, FL	LSU Grad.
2003-04	Anjelica Selden	Vanden, Fairfield, CA	UCLA Asst.Coach
2002-03	Lisa Dodd	University City, San Diego, CA	UNLV Head Coach
2002	Alicia Hollowell	Fairfield, Fairfield, CA	Univ. of Arizona Grad.
2001	Catherine Osterman	Cypress Falls, Houston, TX	Texas State Asst.
2000	Tia Bollinger	Mater Dei, Santa Ana, CA	Washington Grad.
1999	Maureen LeCocq	Chaminade College Prep, West Hills, CA	Stanford Univ. Grad.
1998	Amanda Freed	Pacifica, Garden Grove, CA	NCAA Softball Analyst

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