

VERMONT ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE VERMONT BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 1, 2026) — In its 41<sup>st</sup> year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Kaiden McCarthy of Vermont Academy is the 2025-26 Gatorade Vermont Baseball Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes McCarthy as Vermont's best high school baseball player and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park, TX), MacKenzie Gore (2016-17, Whiteville High School, NC) and Seth Hernandez (2024-25, Corona High School, CA).

The 6 foot, 190-pound senior right-handed pitcher led the Wildcats (15-6) to a berth in the Lakes Region championship game this past season. McCarthy went 3-0 with a 0.72 ERA, striking out 42 batters against just six walks while posting a 0.47 WHIP and a -0.69 Fielding Independent Pitching ERA (FIP). He also batted .333 with one homer, eight RBI and nine runs. Ranked as the nation's No. 44 prospect in his class by Perfect Game, he's also ranked as the No. 77 overall prospect in the upcoming MLB draft by Baseball America and as the No. 79 prospect by Prep Baseball Report. He is a two-time Lakes Region Pitcher of the Year and a 2026 Perfect Game NorthEast All-Region First Team selection.

McCarthy has volunteered locally as a youth baseball coach. "McCarthy is one of the best high school prospects scouts have ever seen from the state of Vermont," said Carlos Collazo, Baseball America draft expert. "He will make draft history for the state if he's selected inside the first three rounds and has a chance to go in that range thanks to an elite combination of pure stuff and athleticism. He missed some time with an injury this spring, but he's dynamic and fluid on the mound and can throw his fastball up to 99 mph with a pair of high-speed breaking balls that look like wipeout offerings."

McCarthy has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Tennessee this fall, but is projected as an early round selection in July's Major League Baseball First Year Player Draft.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. 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 winners in each sport.

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, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://x.com/Gatorade).

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