

**COLONY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ALASKA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Taylor Passard of Colony High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Alaska Softball 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 Passard as Alaska’s best high school softball player and she joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Cat Osterman (2000-01, Cypress, TX), Alicia Hollowell (2001-02, Fairfield, CA) and Hannah Wells (2024-25, Coahoma, TX).

At the time of her selection, the 5-foot-8 freshman shortstop and outfielder had led the Knights to a 32-2 record and a berth in the Division I state tournament this spring. Passard batted .671 with 14 homers, 59 RBI and 51 runs entering the postseason, racking up 28 extra-base hits to compile an OPS of 2.148. The 2026 Railbelt Conference MVP, she has twice earned invites to USA Softball’s High Performance Program and is also a First Team All-State selection in both volleyball and basketball.

Passard has volunteered locally stocking shelves at Palmer Food Bank. She has also donated her time as an ice hockey scorekeeper in addition to serving as a mentor for elementary school students. “Passard is truly a freak athlete,” said Josh Ogee, head coach of Dimond High School. “I think Taylor is standing out pretty much above everyone else in the state. She’s a natural athlete, a five-tool player who can hit for power, lay down a bunt and hit for average. Defensively, she’s done everything for them.”

Passard has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her sophomore year of high school this fall.

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 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.

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