

DARIEN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE CONNECTICUT SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 5, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Vivian Knott of Darien High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Connecticut 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 Knott as Connecticut'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 6-foot junior left-handed pitcher and first baseman had led the Blue Wave (19-3) to the second round of the Class LL tournament. Knott compiled a 12-2 record in the circle with four saves through 22 games, posting a 0.21 ERA and fanning 244 batters in 96 innings. Her WHIP was just 0.45. She also batted .569 with 8 doubles, 3 triples and 6 home runs entering the postseason round of 16, producing a .666 OBP while slugging 1.138 for an OPS of 1.804 and an Isolated Power percentage of .569. A two-time SHSCA All-State selection, she's ranked as the nation's No. 5 prospect in her class by Softball America.

Knott recently founded the Youth Nourishment Project, a teen-led nonprofit dedicated to combating the after-school hunger gap affecting local youth. She's also founder and director of the Darien Little League Softball Umpiring Project, which oversees scheduling and coordination for all A and AA-level softball game umpires in addition to recruiting and mentoring youth umpires. She has volunteered locally on behalf of the Person to Person Food Pantry and has donated her time as a youth softball instructor. In addition, she works as a sales associate at the Wee Mondine children's clothing boutique. "Vivian's athletic and academic excellence are apparent, but what's less obvious is her selfless attitude and how she puts her teammates and team ahead of individual performance," said Darien High School head coach Nick DeMaio. "Vivian's primary concern is for the team to be successful and that her teammates are recognized for their contributions to our success. She does not seek the limelight and is respectful of all opponents and umpires. She never, ever questions a call or gets upset. Vivian demonstrates a maturity level that enables her to lead by example and her teammates recognize and respect that in her."

Knott has maintained a 3.92 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play softball on scholarship at Stanford University beginning in the fall of 2027.

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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