

**TRAVERSE CITY CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MICHIGAN SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Piper Cavanaugh of Traverse City Central High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Michigan 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 Cavanaugh as Michigan’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-11 senior right-handed pitcher had led the Trojans to a 32-2 record and the Division 1 regional final this spring. Cavanaugh batted .593 with 51 RBI, 57 runs and nine home runs through 34 games, compiling a .633 on-base percentage. Ranked as the nation’s No. 41 prospect in her class by Softball America, she also owned a record of 19-0 with a 0.41 ERA in the circle, fanning 244 batters and walking just four over 102 innings.

Cavanaugh has volunteered locally as a student athletic trainer at Traverse City Central High School athletic events, assisting the school’s trainer with treating injuries. She has also donated her time to a 12U travel softball team, providing pitching instruction. “Her presence changes matchups and strategy and she’s the type of athlete opponents have to account for every inning,” said Brandi Reynolds, Traverse City West High School head coach. “She’s the kind of complete player you don’t see very often.”

Cavanaugh has maintained a 3.99 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play softball at the University of Oregon 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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