

**BELLEVUE EAST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Alisha McMurtry of Bellevue East High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Nebraska 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 McMurtry as Nebraska’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).

The 5-foot-9 senior right-handed pitcher led the Chieftains to a 24-11 record and a berth in the Class A state tournament this past season. McMurtry compiled a record of 19-9 in the circle with a 1.11 ERA and 315 strikeouts in 169 innings, an average of 1.86 strikeouts per frame. Named First Team All-Nebraska by the Omaha World Herald and First Team Super State by the Lincoln Journal Star, she also batted .524 with seven home runs.

A member of the Bellevue East High School chapter of the National Honor Society, McMurtry has volunteered locally greeting elementary school students when they arrive at school and assisting at various elementary school events. She has also donated her time as a special education volunteer at her school and providing pitching instruction to youth softball players. “Alisha was the best overall player throughout the season,” said Bill Heard, head coach at Gretna High School. “She was dominant in the circle and was as good offensively as anyone we saw.”

McMurtry has maintained a 4.24 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play softball at the University of Nebraska-Omaha 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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