

**PINKERTON ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEW HAMPSHIRE SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 2026) — In its 41<sup>st</sup> year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Julia Caruso of Pinkerton Academy is the 2025-26 Gatorade New Hampshire 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 Caruso as New Hampshire’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 right-handed pitcher had led the Astros to a 16-2 record and a berth in the Division I state tournament this spring. Caruso compiled a 10-1 record on the mound entering the postseason, striking out 141 batters against just 12 walks over 72.1 innings. She also batted .426 through 18 games with four homers and 18 RBI to compile an OPS of 1.394. A Premier Girls Fastpitch Futures All-American Game Finalist and 2025 Eagle-Tribune All-Star, she began tournament play with a program-record 410 career strikeouts.

A World Language Honor Society member and president of her class, Caruso has volunteered locally by helping to organize the Pinkerton Academy Astrothon, an overnight school event that benefits the Boston Children’s Hospital. She has also served on the school’s Leadership Council of Athletics. “She’s an absolute game-changing presence in every aspect,” said Kevin Handy, head coach at Nashua South High School. “She combines elite physical tools, size, strength, athleticism, speed and movement with a very advanced understanding of pitching strategy and situational awareness. What makes her great, in my opinion, is her ability to sequence hitters and attack lineups with intent rather than relying on velocity or talent alone. She’s a true student of the game.”

Caruso has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play softball at Penn State University, where her father played football and her mother played field hockey, 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](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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