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**NORTH KINGSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® RHODE ISLAND SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 4, 2015) — In its 30th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Rachel Kantor of North Kingstown High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Rhode Island Softball Player of the Year. Kantor is the first Gatorade Rhode Island Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from North Kingstown High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Kantor as Rhode Island's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Kantor joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The 5-foot-10 senior right-handed pitcher and infielder had led the Skippers to an 18-1 record and a berth in the Division I state tournament at the time of her selection. Kantor had posted a 16-1 record with a 0.71 ERA thru 19 games. She had struck out 95 batters in 69 innings pitched, allowing just 38 hits and 11 walks. A 2014 Providence Journal First Team All-State honoree, she was batting .367 with two home runs and a .533 slugging percentage.

Kantor has maintained a weighted 3.92 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally at the NK5K road race and as a youth softball coach.

"Rachel is without a doubt the key to her team's success," said Stefanie Bello, head coach of La Salle Academy. "She has the ability to not just throw strikes but she controls the batters with her movement and pitch location. She makes the batters over-think what pitch is coming next."

Kantor will attend Wesleyan University, where she will play softball beginning this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Kantor joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Softball Players of the Year Karissa Carlton (2013-14, North Smithfield High School), Lindsay Mayer (2012-13 & 2011-12, Lincoln High School), Alyssa McCoart (2010-11, Lincoln High School), Elise Fortier (2009-10, Coventry), Fallon Scorpio (2008-09, St. Mary Academy-Bay View), and Steph Morse (2007-08 & 2006-07, Warwick Veterans) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit www.gatorade.com/poy.

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