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**CHAPEL HILL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® GEORGIA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 2, 2016) — In its 31st year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Ashley Morgan of Chapel Hill High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Georgia Softball Player of the Year. Morgan is the first Gatorade Georgia Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Chapel Hill 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 Morgan as Georgia's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Morgan 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-6 junior left-handed pitcher led the Panthers (32-3) to the Class 5A state championship this past season. Morgan compiled a 19-1 record with a 0.81 ERA in the circle and slugged her way to a .505 batting average, 11 home runs and 43 RBI at the plate. The Class 5A Player of the Year, she is also a two-time First Team All-State selection and a three-time County Player of the Year.

Morgan has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of community improvement initiatives and blood-donation drives.

"Morgan throws hard and does a great job of sequencing and changing up her pitches," said Stacy Parker, head coach at Dalton High. "She's also a pure power hitter, but she can hit it to all fields. She's just a really good player overall."

Morgan will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Morgan joins recent Gatorade Georgia Softball Players of the Year Kelly Barnhill (2014-15, Pope High School), Meghan Gregg (2013-14, Flint River Academy), Megan Betsa (2012-13, Union Grove High School), Geri Ann Glasco (2011-12, Oconee County High School), Kelsey Mericka, (2010-11, Kell High School), Lori Spingola, (2009-10, Marist School), Hope Rush (2008-09, Eagle's Landing Christian Academy), Kelli Wheeler (2007-08, Lassiter High School), and Alicia Mills, (2006-07, Sequoyah High School) 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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