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**PAPILLION-LA VISTA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® NEBRASKA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 2, 2016) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced **Samantha Dellinger of Papillion-La Vista High School** as its **2015-16 Gatorade Nebraska Softball Player of the Year**. Dellinger is the third Gatorade Nebraska Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Papillion-La Vista 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 Dellinger as Nebraska's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Dellinger 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-4 senior second baseman and right-handed pitcher led the Monarchs (31-6) to the Class A state finals this past season. Dellinger slugged her way to a .531 batting average with 10 home runs, 43 RBI and 43 runs scored. She also posted a 9-1 record on the mound with a 1.93 ERA, striking out 74 batters in 54 innings. Dellinger was selected captain of the Omaha World-Herald All-Nebraska team and is a two-time member of the Lincoln Journal Star Super-State team.

Dellinger has maintained a 4.30 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of an animal shelter, a nursing home, tornado recovery efforts and the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure.

"Dellinger is the toughest out we've faced in several years, and she never takes a pitch off," said Kevin Dunn, head coach at Westside High. "She's a very versatile player with a great work ethic."

Dellinger has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Creighton University 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.

Dellinger joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Softball Players of the Year Erin Lockhart (2014-15, Lincoln Southeast High School), Kaylan Jablonski (2013-14, Skutt Catholic High School), Madi Unzicker (2012-13, Millard South High School), Alicia Armstrong (2011-12, Beatrice High School), Allie Mathewson, (2010-11, Papillion-La Vista South High School), Becca Changstrom, (2009-10 & 2008-09, Lincoln Southwest High School), and Ashley Hagemann (2007-08 & 2006-07, Elkhorn 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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