

Contact: John Manzo (312-729-3656)

**ORANGE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NORTH CAROLINA 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 Mia Davidson of Orange High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade North Carolina Softball Player of the Year. Davidson is the first Gatorade North Carolina Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Orange 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 Davidson as North Carolina's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Davidson 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-5 junior catcher led the Panthers (23-4) to the third round of the Class 3A state playoffs this past season. Davidson compiled a .740 batting average with 18 home runs, 49 RBI and 57 runs scored. A two-time All-State honoree, she posted an on-base percentage of .851 and a slugging percentage of 2.060. Davidson is the Big 8 Conference Player of the Year and is ranked as the nation's No. 8 recruit in the Class of 2017 by FloSoftball.com.

Davidson has maintained a 3.96 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, she has raised funds to send seriously ill children to summer camp and has also volunteered locally on behalf of a food bank.

"Davidson is the best hitter that I've seen in over 23 years coaching softball, and the best catcher too," said Robbie Wray, head coach at Middle Creek High. "She has a great arm and her knowledge of the game is second to none."

Davidson will begin her senior season 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.

Davidson joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Softball Players of the Year Mary Williams (2014-15, Cape Fear High School), Vada Sherrill (2013-14, Alexander Central High School), Lexi Shubert (2012-13, Fred T. Foard High School), Lexi Davis (2011-12, Porter Ridge High School), Chelsea Wilkinson, (2010-11, Alexander Central High School), Chelsea Wilkinson, (2009-10, Alexander Central High School), Tisha Mahon (2008-09, North Davidson High School), Chelsea Leonard (2007-08, Central Davidson High School), and Ashton Ward, (2006-07, Butler 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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