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**MARIST CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® OREGON 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 Lauren Burke of Marist Catholic High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Oregon Softball Player of the Year. Burke is the first Gatorade Oregon Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Marist Catholic 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 Burke as Oregon's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Burke 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.).

At the time of her selection, the 5-foot-8 junior shortstop had led the Spartans to a 24-5 record and a berth in the Class 5A state tournament semifinals. Burke batted .712 with 21 home runs and 58 RBI through 29 games. She recorded two three-homer games and hit a state single-game record four home runs in another. A three-time Class 5A First Team All-State honoree, she also batted out 18 doubles, scored 66 runs, stole 23 bases and posted a .737 on-base percentage along with a 1.510 slugging percentage entering the postseason final four.

Burke has maintained a 3.07 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally with Meals on Wheels and as a youth softball coach.

"Lauren is the best high school softball player I have seen in a number of years," said John White, head coach of Eagle Point High. "She has power, hits for a very high average, runs exceptionally well and can play every position on the field."

Burke has made a verbal commitment to play softball on an athletic scholarship at the University of Oregon beginning in the fall of 2017.

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.

Burke joins recent Gatorade Oregon Softball Players of the Year Emily Sorem (2014-15, Tualatin High School), Katie Donovan (2013-14, South Salem High School), Maryssa Becker (2012-13 & 2011-12, North Medford High School), Alyssa Gillespie (2010-11, Glencoe High School), Kaitlin Inglesby (2009-10, Central Catholic High School), Anna Bertrand (2008-09, McMinnville High School), Paige Hall (2007-08, Jesuit High School), and Mikayla Endicott (2006-07, Roseburg 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.