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**JUAB HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® UTAH 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 Taylei Williams of Juab High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Utah Softball Player of the Year. Williams is the first Gatorade Utah Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Juab 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 Williams as Utah's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Williams 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 right-handed pitcher and center fielder posted a 17-3 record along with a 0.77 ERA this past season, leading the Wasps (25-3) to a runner-up finish in the Class 3A state tournament. Williams struck out 223 batters in 119 innings pitched, allowing just 37 hits and issuing only 27 walks. The 2015 Class 3A First Team All-State selection also batted .641 with 12 home runs, 14 doubles, 44 runs scored, 65 RBI and a 1.462 slugging percentage.

Williams has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom and is ranked No. 1 in her class. The winner of a Sewing and Fashion Review contest at the Juab County Fair, she is the owner of a nail design and painting business. She has volunteered locally as an elementary-school aide and as a youth softball and volleyball instructor.

"Taylei Williams is a very dangerous hitter that is tough to get out," said Tyler Bailey, head coach of North Sanpete High. "She is also the most dominant pitcher in Class 3A. Juab had much success this year thanks in large part to Taylei."

Williams has made a verbal commitment to play softball on an athletic scholarship at Southern Utah University 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.

Williams joins recent Gatorade Utah Softball Players of the Year Kaycie Jensen (2014-15, Springville High School), Kirtlyn Bohling (2013-14 & 2012-13, Salem Hills High School), Jordan Theurer (2011-12, Bear River High School), MaCauley Flint,(2010-11, Roy High School), Tori Almond (2009-10, Bingham High School), Shelbi Tyteca (2008-09, Viewmont High School), Tori Almond (2007-08, Bingham High School), and Cyd Allen (2006-07, Taylorsville 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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