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**CARROLL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® VIRGINIA 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 Sydney Nester of Carroll County High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Virginia Softball Player of the Year. Nester is the first Gatorade Virginia Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Carroll County 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 Nester as Virginia's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Nester 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-10 sophomore right-handed pitcher had led the Cavaliers to a 22-0 record and a berth in the Class 4A West Regional tournament semifinals against Fauquier High, scheduled for June 2. At the time of her selection, Nester had posted an 18-0 record with one save and a 0.36 ERA. She had struck out 248 batters in 115.1 innings pitched, allowing just 42 hits and issuing only 14 walks. The 2015 MaxPreps Freshman All-American was batting .552 with 12 doubles, 29 RBI, a .607 on-base percentage and a .851 slugging percentage.

Nester has maintained a weighted 4.06 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally by assisting at swim meets in addition to serving as a youth softball coach.

"Sydney Nester is without a doubt a dominant high school player," said Nick Sharp, head coach of Cave Spring High. "As a pitcher she has a dangerous combination of velocity and control and will pull the string on a good changeup as well. At the plate, she is a strong hitter that can hit for average as well as power."

Nester has made a verbal commitment to play softball on an athletic scholarship at N.C. State University beginning in the fall of 2018.

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.

Nester joins recent Gatorade Virginia Softball Players of the Year Maddy Morris (2014-15, Kecoughtan High School), Ashley Flesch (2013-14, Lake Braddock High School), Tori Finucane (2012-13 & 2011-12, Bishop O'Connell High School), Kelly Heinz (2010-11, Lee-Davis High School), Chelsey Dunham (2009-10, South County Secondary School), Caroline Williams (2008-09, Loudoun Valley High School), and Caitlyn Delahaba (2007-08 & 2006-07, Broad Run 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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