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**WHITEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 30, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced MacKenzie Gore of Whiteville High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade North Carolina Baseball Player of the Year. Gore is the third Gatorade North Carolina Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Whiteville 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 Gore as North Carolina's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Gore joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo High School, Mich.), Jon Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Preparatory School, Wash.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman High School, Tenn.), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas), Rick Porcello (2006-2007, Seaton Hall Preparatory School, N.J.) and Kris Bryant (2009-10, Bonanza High School, Nev.).

The 6-foot-2, 175-pound senior left-handed pitcher, outfielder and first baseman had led the Wolfpack to a 21-6 record and a berth in the Class 1A semifinals at the time of his selection. Gore posted a 9-0 record on the mound with a 0.22 ERA and 132 strikeouts in 63.1 innings through 27 games. Ranked as the nation's No. 4 recruit in the Class of 2017 by Baseball America and No. 5 by Perfect Game, he also batted .480 with six home runs, 25 RBI and an .880 slugging percentage.

A member of the National Honor Society, Gore has volunteered on behalf of Rady's Children's Hospital in San Diego and in association with his church youth group. "MacKenzie Gore is a fierce competitor," said Whiteville High head coach Brett Harwood. "The combination of his elite athleticism and tremendous work ethic has made him one of the best players in the nation."

Gore has maintained a 4.07 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at East Carolina University this fall, but is projected as an early round selection in June's Major League Baseball draft.

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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Gore joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Baseball Players of the Year Logan Davidson (2015-16, Providence High School), Max Wotell (2014-15, Marvin Ridge High School), Braxton Davidson (2013-14, T.C. Roberson High School), Ryder Jones (2012-13, Watauga High School), Corey Seager (2011-12, Northwest Cabarrus High School), Dillon Maples (2010-11, Pinecrest High School), Matt Roberts (2009-10, Graham High School), Brian Goodwin (2008-09, Rocky Mount High School), Tyler Hanover (2007-08, North Davidson High School), and Madison Bumgarner (2006-07, South Caldwell High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, MacKenzie will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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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