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**CHESHIRE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® CONNECTICUT SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Abby Abramson of Cheshire High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Connecticut Softball Player of the Year. Abramson is the first Gatorade Connecticut Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Cheshire 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 Abramson as Connecticut's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Abramson joins an elite alumni association of past state softball award-winners, including Catherine Osterman (2000-01, Cy Spring High School, Texas), Kelsey Stewart (2009-10, Arkansas City High School, Kan.), Carley Hoover (2012-13 D.W. Daniel High School, S.C.), Jenna Lilley (2012-13, Hoover High School, Ohio), Morgan Zerkle (2012-13 Cabell Midland High School, W. Va.), and Rachel Garcia (2014-15, Highland High School, Calif.).

The 5-foot-10 senior right-handed pitcher had led the Rams to a 19-1 record and a berth in the Class LL state tournament at the time of her selection. Abramson owned an 18-1 record and a 0.93 ERA in the circle and also compiled a .391 batting average, .631 on-base percentage, five home runs and 15 RBI through 20 games. She also struck out 242 batters in 122 innings pitched. As a junior, Abramson was named Player of the Year by the Connecticut High School Coaches Association, the New Haven Register and the Hartford Courant, while also earning Class LL state championship MVP honors.

President of the Best Buddies club at her school, Abramson has volunteered locally on behalf of a food pantry, youth softball clinics and Unified Sports and Theater programs. "Abramson is a one-man wrecking crew," said Amanda Acampora, head coach at Lauralton Hall High School. "She's the last person you want to see at the plate with the game on the line and the last pitcher you want to face in a big situation. There's no one in the state who throws harder or with more movement."

Abramson has maintained a 4.68 weighted GPA in the classroom. She will attend the University of Pennsylvania this fall, where she will play softball.

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.

Abramson joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Softball Players of the Year Caroline Taber (2015-16, 2014-15 & 2014-15, Fitch High School), Tatum Buckley (2013-14 & 2012-13, Masuk High School), Kelli Connors (2011-12, Waterford High School), Brianna Turgeon (2010-11 & 2009-10 Fitch High School), Rachele Fico (2008-09 & 2007-08, Masuk High School), and Lauren Bspuda (2006-07, Amity High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Abby 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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