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**CAMBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® GEORGIA 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 Keara Napoli of Cambridge High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Georgia Softball Player of the Year. Napoli is the first Gatorade Georgia Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Cambridge 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 Napoli as Georgia's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Napoli 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-6 senior right-handed pitcher led the Bears (32-1) to the Class 6A state championship this past season. Napoli posted a 32-1 record with a 0.58 ERA in the circle along with a .505 batting average, seven home runs and 36 RBI. She struck out 249 batters in 173.2 innings pitched. The Class 6A Player of the Year, Napoli is also a three-time Region Pitcher of the Year and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution Player of the Year.

A member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Napoli has volunteered locally on behalf of a children's hospital and youth softball programs. "Napoli was easily the most impressive player we saw all year," said Shane McCook, head coach at Grovetown High School. "She threw harder than anyone else we faced, and her ball moved a ton. We had a great year and saw a lot of good teams, but she made us look like we weren't even on the same level."

Napoli has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Georgia this fall.

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.

Napoli joins recent Gatorade Georgia Softball Players of the Year Ashley Morgan (2015-16, Chapel Hill High School), Kelly Barnhill (2014-15, Pope High School), Meghan Gregg (2013-14, Flint River Academy), Megan Betsa (2012-13, Union Grove High School), Geri Ann Glasco (2011-12, Oconee County High School), Kelsey Mericka (2010-11, Kell High School), Lori Spingola (2009-10, Marist School), Hope Rush (2008-09, Eagle's Landing Christian Academy), Kelli Wheeler (2007-08, Lassiter High School), and Alicia Mills (2006-07, Sequoyah High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Keara 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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