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**NORTH DESOTO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® LOUISIANA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Emma Callie (EC) Delafield of North DeSoto High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Louisiana Softball Player of the Year. Delafield is the first Gatorade Louisiana Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from North DeSoto 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 Delafield as Louisiana's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Delafield 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-7 senior right-handed pitcher led the Lady Griffins to a 32-3 record and a third straight Class 4A state championship this past season. Delafield posted a 28-3 mark in the circle with a 0.67 earned run average and 250 strikeouts in 177 innings pitched. At the plate, she posted a .512 batting average with 10 doubles, nine triples, nine home runs, 42 runs scored and 62 RBI. She recorded a .567 on-base percentage and a .976 slugging percentage. A two-time Shreveport Times Pitcher of the Year, she concluded her prep softball career with 86 wins.

A student ambassador at North DeSoto High, Delafield has volunteered locally as a youth softball coach and as part of multiple community-service initiatives through her church. "EC was amazing, the rock of the team," said Michelle Owens, head coach of Benton High School. "She was consistent all year long and continued all the way through the state championship game."

Delafield has maintained a 3.68 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball on scholarship at Northwestern State University beginning 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.

Delafield joins recent Gatorade Louisiana Softball Players of the Year Jensen Howell (2015-16, Holy Savior Menard Central High School), Kara Gremillion (2014-15, St. Amant High School), Katie Brignac (2013-14, John Curtis Christian School), Baylee Corbello (2012-13 & 2011-12, Sam Houston High School), Sara Corbello (2010-11, Barbe High School), Meghan Patterson (2009-10 & 2008-09, Mount Carmel Academy), Kelee Grimes (2007-08, Pineville High School), and Ashley Brignac (2006-07, John Curtis Christian) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Emma Callie (EC) 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.

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