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**BISHOP O'CONNELL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® VIRGINIA 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 Kathryn Sandercock of Bishop O'Connell High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Virginia Softball Player of the Year. Sandercock is the third Gatorade Virginia Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Bishop O'Connell 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 Sandercock 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, Sandercock 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 junior right-handed pitcher led the Knights to a 27-0 record and both the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference and the Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association Division I state titles this past season. Sandercock posted a 26-0 mark in the circle with a 0.09 earned run average and 330 strikeouts in 151 innings pitched, allowing 35 hits and 19 walks. At the plate, she batted .471 with 10 doubles, eight home runs, seven triples and 57 RBI. A member of the USA Softball Junior Women's National Team, she finished the 2017 prep campaign with a .505 on-base percentage and a 1.023 slugging percentage.

Sandercock has volunteered locally at an elder-care facility and as a youth softball coach. "Kathryn Sandercock is the real deal—a dangerous hitter as well as a dominating pitcher," said Rita Horning Rahl, head coach of Elizabeth Seton High School. "The improvement with her mechanics from last year to this year was remarkable. As if she wasn't tough enough to hit last year, this year she really mixed speed and worked the ball around all four quadrants of the strike zone."

Sandercock has maintained a 3.76 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play softball on scholarship at James Madison 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 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.

Sandercock joins recent Gatorade Virginia Softball Players of the Year Sydney Nester (2015-16, Carroll County High School), 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.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Kathryn 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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