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## **ABINGDON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE VIRGINIA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 29, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Cade Hungate of Abingdon High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Virginia Baseball Player of the Year. Hungate is the first Gatorade Virginia Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Abingdon 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 Hungate as Virginia's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Hungate 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, 195-pound senior shortstop and right-handed pitcher had led the Falcons to an 18-3 record at the time of his selection. Hungate owned an 8-0 record with a 1.30 earned run average in 37.2 innings pitched, striking out 57 batters and walking 19 through 21 games. At the plate, Hungate had posted a .552 batting average with eight doubles, four home runs, 34 runs and 35 runs batted in. He had also drawn 23 walks for a .708 on-base percentage along with a .897 slugging percentage.

An avid painter and sculptor, Hungate has volunteered locally as a youth baseball coach, and he has donated his time as part of multiple community-service initiatives through the Washington County Community Scholars program.

"Cade Hungate has had a solid year with a lot of teams pitching around him," said Mark Daniels, head coach of Virginia High. "He is big, strong and gets around the bases well. The baseball comes off his bat differently when centered and he is a tough out."

Hungate has maintained a 3.93 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play baseball on scholarship at Florida State University 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.

Hungate joins recent Gatorade Virginia Baseball Players of the Year Andrew Abbott (2016-17, Halifax County High School), Khalil Lee (2015-16, Flint Hill School), Nic Enright (2014-15, The Steward School), J.B. Bukauskas (2013-14, Stone Bridge High School), Connor Jones (2012-13, Great Bridge High School), Nathan Kirby (2011-12, James River High School), Nick Thompson (2010-11, Western Branch High School), Kyle Crockett (2009-10, Poquoson), Ethan Carter (2008-09, Menchville), Austin Stadler (2007-08, James River), and Neil Ramirez (2006-07, Kempsville) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Cade 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 <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.

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