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Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729-3685)

**UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 29, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Ross Mulhall of University High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade West Virginia Baseball Player of the Year. Mulhall is the first Gatorade West Virginia Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from University 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 Mulhall as West Virginia's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Mulhall 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-4, 210-pound senior first baseman led the Hawks to an 18-10 record and the sectional finals this past season. Mulhall produced a .472 batting average with 11 home runs, 12 doubles and 44 RBI. A Rawlings/Perfect Game Honorable Mention All-American, he was also an All-State honoree and a First Team All-Conference selection.

A member of his school's Student Council, Mulhall has volunteered locally on behalf of the Salvation Army and a food pantry.

"You really don't want to pitch to Mulhall, because if you miss, you're not going to get the ball back," said Glen McNew, Preston High head coach. "He is sound at everything, and he can smoke the ball. He's just an excellent all-around player."

Mulhall has maintained a 3.72 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at La Salle University in Pennsylvania 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.

Mulhall joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Baseball Players of the Year Drew Hefner (2016-17, Bridgeport High School), Paul Witt (2015-16, Jefferson High School), Zach Minnick (2014-15, Logan High School), Seth Kinker (2013-14, Cabell Midland High School), Corey Bird (2012-13, Herbert Hoover High School), Korey Dunbar (2011-12, Nitro High School), Tyler Payne (2010-11, Hurricane High School), J.R. Bradley (2009-10, Nitro), Corey Miller (2008-09, Cabell Midland), Chase Pickering (2007-08, Nitro), and Patrick Arnold (2006-07, Huntington) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Ross 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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