

Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729-3685)

**SEYMOUR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® CONNECTICUT SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 4, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Becca Johnson of Seymour High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Connecticut Softball Player of the Year. Johnson is the first Gatorade Connecticut Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Seymour 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 Johnson as Connecticut's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Johnson 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-5 senior outfielder had led the Wildcats to a 20-1 record and a berth in the Class M state tournament at the time of her selection. Johnson owned a .732 batting average with 35 stolen bases, 44 runs scored and an on-base percentage of .789 through 21 games. A First Team All-State honoree, she was also an All-Area and All-Conference selection, a MaxPreps Second Team Small School All-American, and MVP of the 2017 Class M state tournament.

Johnson has volunteered locally on behalf of an animal rescue center, her school's Link Crew and youth softball programs.

Johnson has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Colgate 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.

Johnson joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Softball Players of the Year Abby Abramson (2016-17, Cheshire High School), Caroline Taber (2015-16 & 2014-15, Fitch High School), Tatum Buckley (2013-14 & 2012-13, Masuk High School), Kelli Connors (2011-12, Waterford High School), Brianna Turgeon (2010-11 & 2009-10, Fitch High School), Rachele Fico (2008-09 & 2007-08, Masuk High School), and Lauren Bespuda (2006-07, Amity Regional High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Becca 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/>.