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**MARIST CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® OREGON SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 4, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Ariel Carlson of Marist Catholic High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Oregon Softball Player of the Year. Carlson is the second Gatorade Oregon Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Marist Catholic 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 Carlson as Oregon's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Carlson 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-6 junior right-handed pitcher had led the Spartans to a 26-3 record and a berth in the Class 5A state semifinals at the time of her selection. Carlson produced a .682 batting average with 19 home runs and 71 RBI through 29 games. She also cranked 17 doubles, scored 54 runs and produced a .737 on-base percentage along with a 1.614 slugging percentage. In the circle, she posted a 22-2 mark with a 1.09 ERA and 204 strikeouts in 134.2 innings pitched. Entering the state semifinals, she was sitting on 51 career home runs.

A photographer for the school newspaper, Carlson has volunteered locally at a nursing home and as a youth softball coach.

Carlson has maintained a weighted 3.52 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play softball on scholarship at the University of Oregon beginning in the fall of 2019.

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.

Carlson joins recent Gatorade Oregon Softball Players of the Year Lauren Burke (2016-17 & 2015-16, Marist Catholic High School), Emily Sorem (2014-15, Tualatin High School), Katie Donovan (2013-14, South Salem High School), Maryssa Becker (2012-13, North Medford High School), Maryssa Becker (2011-12, North Medford High School), Alyssa Gillespie (2010-11, Glencoe High School), Kaitlin Inglesby (2009-10, Central Catholic), Anna Bertrand (2008-09, McMinnville), Paige Hall (2007-08, Jesuit), and Mikayla Endicott (2006-07, Roseburg) among the state's list of former award winners.

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