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**RIDGE POINT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® TEXAS 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 Makinzy Herzog of Ridge Point High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Texas Softball Player of the Year. Herzog is the first Gatorade Texas Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Ridge Point 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 Herzog as Texas' best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Herzog 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-7 senior right-handed pitcher and outfielder compiled a 26-1 mark in the circle with a 1.26 earned run average this past season, leading the Panthers (31-3-1) to the Class 6A regional quarterfinals. Herzog struck out 280 batters in 150 innings pitched, allowed just 82 hits and 37 walks. At the plate, Herzog batted .569 with 14 doubles, 47 runs scored, 44 runs batted in, 20 stolen bases and a .931 slugging percentage. She is a three-time district most valuable player and was a 2017 First Team All-State selection.

An award-winning artist, Herzog has volunteered locally as a youth softball coach, and she has donated her time on multiple community-service initiatives through her church youth group.

Herzog has maintained a weighted 4.31 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball 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.

Herzog joins recent Gatorade Texas Softball Players of the Year Casey Dixon (2016-17, Willis High School), Maddie MacGrandle (2015-16, Frisco High School), Samantha Show (2014-15, East Bernard High School), Randi Rupp (2013-14, Barbers Hill High School), Samantha Show (2012-13, Pearland High School), Heather Stearns (2011-12, Hebron High School), Paige McDuffee (2010-11, The Woodlands High School), Rachel Fox (2009-10 & 2008-09, Fort Bend Baptist Academy), Whitney Canion (2007-08, Aledo), and Brittany Barnhill (2006-07, Northwest) among the state's list of former award winners.

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