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**MADISON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® VIRGINIA 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 Alex Echazarreta of Madison High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Virginia Softball Player of the Year. Echazarreta is the first Gatorade Virginia Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Madison 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 Echazarreta as Virginia's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Echazarreta 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, first baseman and third baseman had led the Warhawks to a 23-0 record in their pursuit of a second straight Class 6 state championship at the time of her selection. Echazarreta posted a 19-0 record in the circle with a 0.59 ERA and 198 strikeouts in 106 innings through 23 games. She surrendered just 39 hits and issued 19 walks. At the plate, the four-time First Team All-Conference selection produced a .541 batting average with nine home runs, 36 runs batted in and a 1.068 slugging percentage.

Echazarreta has volunteered locally as a peer tutor and as a youth softball coach.

Echazarreta has maintained a weighted 3.99 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball on scholarship at Purdue 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.

Echazarreta joins recent Gatorade Virginia Softball Players of the Year Kathryn Sandercock (2016-17, Bishop O'Connell High School), Sydney Nester (2015-16, Carroll County High School), Maddy Morris (2014-15, Kecoughtan High School), Ashley Flesch (2013-14, Lake Braddock High School), Tori Finucane (2012-13 & 2011-12, Bishop O'Connell High School), Kelly Heinz (2010-11, Lee-Davis High School), Chelsey Dunham (2009-10, South County Secondary School), Caroline Williams (2008-09, Loudoun Valley), and Caitlyn Delahaba (2007-08 & 2006-07, Broad Run) among the state's list of former award winners.

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