

## GRAND ISLAND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEBRASKA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

**CHICAGO** (May 23, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Cole Evans of Grand Island Senior High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Nebraska Baseball Player of the Year**. Evans is the third Gatorade Nebraska Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Grand Island Senior 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 Evans as Nebraska's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Evans joins an elite alumni association of 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-2, 210-pound senior shortstop and right-handed pitcher led the Islanders to a 19-11 record and the Class A state tournament this past season. Evans batted .556 with 15 doubles, 30 RBI, 30 runs scored and an on-base percentage of .631. A First Team Super-State honoree, he was also named to the All-Nebraska First Team.

A devoted member of his church youth group, Evans has volunteered locally on behalf of a youth mentoring program. "Cole Evans is excellent defensively and just as good at the plate," said Jimmy Johnson, head coach at Columbus High. "Even when he makes an out, he squares up the ball. He's a great competitor and his value to that team is tremendous."

Evans has maintained a 3.59 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Creighton 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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Evans joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Baseball Players of the Year Dylan Phillips (2017-18, Creighton Prep), Austin Schultz (2016-17, Norris High School), Cole Stobbe (2015-16 & 2014-15, Millard West High School), and Jakson Reetz (2013-14, Norris High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Evans also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [www.Gatorade.com/POY](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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