

ROSE BUD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE ARKANSAS SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (May 30, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Joley Mitchell of Rose Bud High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Arkansas Softball Player of the Year**. Mitchell is the first Gatorade Arkansas Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Rose Bud 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 Mitchell as Arkansas' best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Mitchell 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-8 senior third baseman and catcher led the Ramblers to a 35-1 record and the Class 3A state championship this past season. Mitchell batted .717 with 55 RBI and a state single-season record 85 runs scored—breaking her own mark from a year ago. She clubbed 38 extra-base hits, including 13 home runs, swiped 34 bases, drew 33 walks and compiled a .786 on-base percentage as well as a 1.386 slugging percentage. As the 2018 MaxPreps National Junior Player of the Year, she concluded her prep softball career with a .622 batting average, 58 home runs, 281 runs scored and 197 RBI.

The vice president of the Rose Bud High senior class and editor of the school yearbook, Mitchell has volunteered locally as a youth softball coach. "Joley is the heart and soul of the Lady Ramblers," said Chris Roberts, head coach of Valley Springs High. "Our pitchers knew of her power and were good to keep the ball low or off the plate, but Joley has the ability to go get a pitch and still have the power to send it out of the park."

Mitchell has maintained a weighted 4.05 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Notre Dame 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.

Mitchell joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Softball Players of the Year Hallie Wacaser (2017-18, Bentonville West High School), Maddy Prough (2016-17, Bentonville High School), Autumn Humes (2015-16 & 2014-15, Bald Knob High School), and Andrea Kindrick (2013-14, Russellville High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Mitchell also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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