

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE IDAHO 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 **Kaylan Walker of Rocky Mountain High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Idaho Softball Player of the Year**. Walker is the first Gatorade Idaho Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Rocky Mountain 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 Walker as Idaho's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Walker 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 shortstop led the Grizzlies to a 19-11 record and the Class 5A state final this past season. Walker batted .515 with 13 home runs, 38 RBI and a slugging percentage of .989. A three-time First Team All-Conference selection, she was named the Class 5A Southern Idaho Conference Player of the Year.

Walker has volunteered locally on behalf of food donation drives and a softball program supporting children with special needs. "Kaylan Walker is the best defensive shortstop I've ever seen in the SIC," said Shane Alder, head coach at Capital High School. "She's also an excellent hitter with a lot of power who rarely strikes out. She's probably the best all-around player I've seen in the 13 years I've been coaching in this league."

Walker has maintained a 3.70 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Dixie State University (Utah) 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.

Walker joins recent Gatorade Idaho Softball Players of the Year Lainey Lyle (2017-18, Middleton High School), Lexi Knauss (2016-17, Meridian High School), Bradie Fillmore (2015-16 & 2014-15, Eagle High School) and Vanessa Shippy (2013-14, Lake City High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Walker 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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