

KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE IOWA 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 **Kaylin Kinney of Kennedy High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Iowa Softball Player of the Year**. Kinney is the second Gatorade Iowa Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Kennedy 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 Kinney as Iowa'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, Kinney 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-10 junior right-handed pitcher and first baseman led the Cougars to a 33-6 record and the regional semifinals in 2018. Kinney compiled a 15-3 record with a 0.50 ERA, along with a .563 batting average, 13 home runs and 41 RBI. She struck out 133 batters and walked just four in 126.1 innings pitched. The All-Metro Player of the Year, Kinney was also a First Team All-State selection.

Kinney has volunteered locally on behalf of a soup kitchen, Ronald McDonald House Charities and youth softball programs. "Kinney is just an excellent player and a team leader," said Steve Corkrean, head coach at Winterset High School. "She throws hard, with good movement, and she hits for power. She's the best player on a really talented team."

Kinney has maintained a 3.60 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school with the start of the 2019-20 academic calendar. Iowa – distinct from the other 48 states sanctioning softball – starts every high school season in conjunction with Memorial Day, which results in the annual Gatorade honor being based upon candidates' previous scholastic season and offseason club/showcase performance, if applicable.

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.

Kinney joins recent Gatorade Iowa Softball Players of the Year Alexia Lara (2017-18, Pleasant Valley High School), Megan Weber (2016-17, Kennedy High School), Alyssa Wiebel (2015-16, Benton Community High School), DoniRae Mayhew (2014-15, Bettendorf High School) and Paige Lowary (2013-14, Dallas Center-Grimes High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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