

SCITUATE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE RHODE ISLAND 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 **Haley Venturini of Scituate High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Rhode Island Softball Player of the Year**. Venturini is the first Gatorade Rhode Island Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Scituate 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 Venturini as Rhode Island'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, Venturini 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-9 sophomore right-handed pitcher and shortstop had led the Spartans to a 15-2 record and a berth in the Division II state tournament at the time of her selection. Venturini posted a 13-1 record in the circle with a 0.16 ERA, striking out 235 batters against just 12 walks in 90 innings pitched through 17 games. She recorded six no-hitters, including one perfect game, and held opponents to a .053 batting average. At the plate, the 2018 First Team All-State selection owned a .431 batting average with four home runs, 26 runs scored and a .708 slugging percentage entering the postseason.

A peer tutor, Venturini has volunteered locally as a youth softball coach. "I have never before seen a kid come in as a freshman and dominate the way Haley did last year," said John Lickert, head coach of Scituate High. "This year she has continued her dominance. She came in stronger and even better, and it's showing in her performance on the mound."

Venturini has maintained an A average in the classroom. She will begin her junior year of high school 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.

Venturini joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Softball Players of the Year Ali Blanchard (2017-18, Moses Brown School), Kiara Oliver (2016-17 & 2015-16, North Kingstown High School), Rachel Kantor (2014-15, North Kingstown High School) and Karissa Carlton (2013-14, North Smithfield High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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