

UNION COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA 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 **Bailey Betenbaugh of Union County High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade South Carolina Softball Player of the Year**. Betenbaugh is the second Gatorade South Carolina Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Union County 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 Betenbaugh as South Carolina'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, Betenbaugh 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 senior right-handed pitcher and first baseman led the Yellow Jackets to a 23-5 record and the Class 3A state finals this past season. The state's Gatorade Softball Player of the Year as a sophomore, Betenbaugh compiled a 21-4 record with a 0.64 ERA and batted .481 with 12 home runs and 38 RBI's. She struck out 225 batters in 152.1 innings pitched. A four-time Region Player of the Year, Betenbaugh was also a two-time Class 4A Player of the Year and was named the High School Sports Report's co-Miss Softball.

A devoted member of her church youth group, Betenbaugh has volunteered locally on behalf of food-donation drives and youth softball programs. "Betenbaugh is a really well-rounded player," said Chuck Stegall, head coach at Fort Mill High. "She has good command of all her pitches and hits her locations really well with her breaking balls. At the plate, she hits with aggression and has the strength to go deep."

Betenbaugh has maintained a 3.97 GPA in the classroom and has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of South Carolina beginning 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.

Betenbaugh joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Softball Players of the Year Karly Heath (2017-18, North Augusta High School), Bailey Betenbaugh (2016-17, Union County High School), and Cayla Drotar (2015-16, 2014-15 & 2013-14, Hartsville High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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