

HURRICANE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA 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 **Caiti Mathes of Hurricane High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade West Virginia Softball Player of the Year**. Mathes is the second Gatorade West Virginia Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Hurricane 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 Mathes as West Virginia'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, Mathes 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 Redskins (33-6) to their fifth consecutive Class AAA state championship this past season. Mathes batted .607 with 22 home runs and 73 RBI, compiling a slugging percentage of 1.337. A three-time First Team All-State selection, Mathes was also named the Kanawha Valley co-Player of the Year.

Mathes has volunteered locally on behalf of the Fraternal Order of Police, youth sports clinics and a Christmas gift program for needy children. "There's not a better hitter in the state of West Virginia than Caiti Mathes," said Jason Roberts, head coach at Parkersburg High. "She's also a great shortstop with the ability to cover ground and make extremely accurate throws. She's one of the toughest players I've ever faced."

Mathes has maintained a 3.74 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Marshall University 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.

Mathes joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Softball Players of the Year Delani Buckner (2017-18, Herbert Hoover High School), Katie Adams (2016-17, Hurricane High School), Alexee Haynes (2015-16, Sissonville High School), Ali Burdette (2014-15, Buffalo High School) and Kenna DeLancey (2013-14, Ritchie County High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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