

**REFUGIO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TEXAS BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 21, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Jared Kelley of Refugio High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Texas Baseball Player of the Year. Kelley is the first Gatorade Texas Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Refugio 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 Kelley as Texas's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Kelley joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo High School, Mich.), Jon Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Preparatory School, Wash.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman High School, Tenn.), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas), Rick Porcello (2006-2007, Seaton Hall Preparatory School, N.J.) and Kris Bryant (2009-10, Bonanza High School, Nev.).

The 6-foot-3, 225-pound senior right-handed pitcher and designated hitter was the starting pitcher at the Under Armour All-America Game at Wrigley Field in Chicago last July, hurling two innings without allowing an earned run while striking out five batters to earn the win. Also a 2019 Perfect Game All-American Classic selection, Kelley posted a 3-0 record with a 0.00 ERA and 34 strikeouts in 12 innings this spring before the season was canceled. The nation's No. 1 prospect as rated by Baseball America, he concluded his prep career with a 32-3 record, a 0.43 ERA and 23 pitching appearances in which he didn't allow a hit.

After Hurricane Harvey devastated his community in 2017, Kelley devoted many hours to helping the area recover from the destruction. He loaded and unloaded truckloads of supplies delivered to Our Lady of Refuge Catholic Church, and he also helped deliver bags of clothes and food to people's residences if they were in need of such supplies. In addition, he helped cut down and remove trees, tree limbs and other debris from the homes and yards of citizens in need of assistance. A member of the Refugio High School National Honor Society, he has volunteered cleaning up around the school and at the concession stands during various sporting events. As a teacher's aide in a seventh grade math class, he helped tutor students who were struggling and falling behind in their math work. He has also donated his time as an umpire for the Refugio Little League Baseball Association and, when he was participating in the Long Beach Area Code Games, he spent time playing baseball with the children undergoing treatment at Rady's Children's Hospital in San Diego. "Jared Kelley owns what is easily the most big-league ready prep arm in the Class of 2020," says Carlos Collazzo, national writer for Baseball America. "He's got the best fastball in the high school class, a pitch that routinely brushes the upper-90s. A consistently plus changeup and a solid breaking ball make him an intimidating physical presence. Perhaps what separates him even more than his velo is the ease with which he throws everything along with his ability to dependably locate his entire arsenal. That's rare for a prep pitcher, and exceedingly so for a pitcher with stuff like his."

Kelley has maintained a 96.2 average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Texas, but is projected as an early-round selection in June's Major League Baseball draft.

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 and 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.

Kelley joins recent Gatorade Texas Baseball Players of the Year Brett Baty (2017-18, Lake Travis High School), Alex Scherff (2016-17, Colleyville Heritage High School), Kyle Muller (2015-16, Jesuit College Preparatory School of Dallas), and Luken Baker (2014-15, Oak Ridge High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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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