

**LAKWOOD RANCH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE FLORIDA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 28, 2020) — In its 35<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Avery Goelz of Lakewood Ranch High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Florida Softball Player of the Year. Goelz is the first Gatorade Florida Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Lakewood Ranch 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 Goelz as Florida'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, Goelz joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, 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 first baseman was named the best player in the state by MaxPreps.com during the 2020 preseason. Goelz backed that up during the Mustangs' 8-0 start this spring, posting a .591 batting average with 13 runs batted in, 10 runs scored, seven extra-base hits and a 1.273 slugging percentage before the season was cancelled. A three-time Miracle Sports Class 8A Offensive Player of the Year, Goelz is ranked as the nation's No. 4 recruit in the Class of 2020 by Extra Inning Softball. She concluded her prep softball career with 157 hits, 142 runs scored, 130 RBI, 29 home runs and a 1.094 slugging percentage.

An aspiring lawyer, Goelz has participated in shadow sessions with local attorneys. She has also volunteered locally on behalf of Lakewood Ranch's Positive Coaching Alliance and as a youth softball coach. "Avery was a game-changer on the field and off," said T.J. Goelz, head coach of Lakewood Ranch High. "With all the hype surrounding her since before she even stepped on the high school field, Avery has managed to stay focused and remain a great teammate.

Goelz has maintained a weighted 4.25 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Florida.

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.

Goelz joins Gatorade Florida Softball Players of the Year Lexi Kilfoyl (2017-18 & 2018-19, Academy at the Lakes), Ally Muraskin (2016-17, Coral Springs Charter School), Katie Chronister (2015-16, Gainesville High School), Jenna Goodrich (2014-15, American Heritage School), and Jenna Goodrich (2014-15, American Heritage 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](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).