

**MARYKNOLL SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE HAWAII SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 28, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Liliana Thomas of Maryknoll School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Hawaii Softball Player of the Year. Thomas is the second Gatorade Hawaii Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Maryknoll 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 Thomas as Hawaii'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, Thomas 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-8 junior catcher and third baseman hit 19 home runs with 63 runs batted in last summer and fall for her Firecrackers Brashear 16-and-under club team against elite-level national competition. In leading the Firecrackers to a fifth-place finish at the Colorado Fireworks Power Pool tournament last July, Thomas collected six home runs and 22 RBI in 12 games. A two-time Second Team All-State selection for Maryknoll School, she is ranked as the nation's No. 57 recruit in the Class of 2021 by Extra Inning Softball.

Thomas has volunteered locally as part of a fundraising campaign to benefit breast cancer research. She has also donated her time at a veterans home and as a student ambassador at Maryknoll School. "Liliana, as a sophomore, was the youngest team captain in all my years of coaching," said John Uekawa, head coach of Maryknoll School. "It says a lot about her because it meant that the upperclassmen respected her and knew that she earned that status. Her leadership role goes beyond her performance on the field."

Thomas has maintained a 3.31 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play softball on scholarship at Arizona State University beginning in the fall of 2021.

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.

Thomas joins Gatorade Hawaii Softball Players of the Year Aleia Agbayani (2018-19, 'Iolani School), Mari Foster (2017-18, Roosevelt High School), Jocelyn Alo (2016-17 & 2015-16, Campbell High School), and Shearyna Labasan (2014-15, Maryknoll 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.