

**ESCANABA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MICHIGAN 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 Gabi Salo of Escanaba High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Michigan Softball Player of the Year. Salo is the first Gatorade Michigan Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Escanaba 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 Salo as Michigan'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, Salo 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-5 senior and right-handed pitcher was named the best player in the state by MaxPreps.com during the 2020 preseason. A three-time Division 2 First Team All-State selection, Salo twice led the Eskymos to the Division 2 state title, including in 2019, as she completed a 26-2 campaign with a 0.23 earned run average, 351 strikeouts and nine no-hitters. Ranked as the nation's No. 52 recruit in the Class of 2020 by FloSoftball, she concluded her prep softball career with a 65-8 record, 0.43 ERA, 824 strikeouts and 12 perfect games.

A member of the Escanaba High School color guard and marching band, Salo has volunteered locally as a youth pitching coach, and she has donated her time to multiple community service initiatives through her church. "Gabi throws harder than any pitcher we've faced in my 41 years," said Tom Kennelly, head coach of Swan Valley High School. "I don't know what else to say, but she is a stud."

Salo has maintained a weighted 3.99 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Wisconsin.

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.

Salo joins Gatorade Michigan Softball Players of the Year Lauren Esman (2018-19, Gull Lake High School), Jenny Bressler (2017-18, Plymouth High School), Meghan Beaubien (2016-17, St. Mary Catholic Central High School), Meghan Beaubien (2015-16 & 2014-15, St. Mary Catholic Central High School), and Meghan Beaubien (2014-15, St. Mary Catholic Central 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](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).