

**CHAMPION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE OHIO 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 Allison Smith of Champion High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Ohio Softball Player of the Year. Smith is the second Gatorade Ohio Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Champion 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 Smith as Ohio'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, Smith 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-11 senior right-handed pitcher and first baseman was named the best player in the state by MaxPreps.com during the 2020 preseason. Smith had an outstanding fall club season for the Beverly Bullets ASA 18-and-under team, firing a perfect game and striking out 139 batters in 100.2 innings against elite-level national competition. A three-time state champion with the Golden Flashes, she concluded her prep softball career ranked No. 2 in Ohio history with 51 home runs. She also amassed 163 runs scored, 162 RBI and 147 hits. In the circle, she posted a 39-1 record with a 0.48 earned run average and six no-hitters.

A member of the Champion High symphonic and marching bands, Smith has volunteered locally as part of fundraising campaigns to benefit the American Heart Association. She has also donated her time to community-beautification projects and as an elementary school tutor. "Allison is continually working hard to be the best player she can be," said Cheryl Weaver, head coach of Champion High School. "She is a very exciting player to watch. She makes the hard plays look easy."

Smith has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom and will graduate as her school's valedictorian. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball on scholarship at Ohio State University.

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.

Smith joins Gatorade Ohio Softball Players of the Year Hope Straight (2018-19, Mount Vernon High School), Megan Turner (2017-18, Champion High School), Carly Wagers (2016-17, Williamsburg High School), Madi Huck (2015-16, Hayes High School), and Tara Trainer (2014-15, Lebanon 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.