

**CAPE ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MAINE SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 18, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Anna Cornell of Cape Elizabeth High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Maine Softball Player of the Year**. Cornell is the first Gatorade Maine Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Cape Elizabeth 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 Cornell as Maine'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, Cornell joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Cat 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-9 senior right-handed pitcher had led the Capers (19-0) to the Class B state semifinals at the time of her selection. Cornell compiled a 14-0 record with a 0.19 ERA through 19 games, allowing just 30 hits and seven walks in 74 innings pitched, while striking out 136 batters. A three-time All-Western Maine Conference selection, she also batted .571 with two home runs, 29 RBI and a 1.506 OPS.

Cornell has served as a peer tutor and has volunteered locally on behalf of her school's Best Buddies program and the American Red Cross. "Anna Cornell was far and away the best player we faced, both in the circle and at the plate," said Kevin Giannino, head coach at York High. "She's a fierce competitor, but she's also gracious and someone you find yourself rooting for."

Cornell has maintained an A average in the classroom. She will attend Ithaca College this fall, where she will play softball.

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 & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Cornell joins recent Gatorade Maine Softball Players of the Year Bella Dickinson (2019-20, Scarborough High School), Abby Orso (2018-19, York High School), Grace McGouldrick (2017-18, Gorham High School), and Jessica Brown (2016-17, Portland High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Cornell has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Cornell is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com, on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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