

**THREE RIVERS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MICHIGAN 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 **Kali Heivilin of Three Rivers High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Michigan Softball Player of the Year**. Heivilin is the first Gatorade Michigan Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Three Rivers 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 Heivilin 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, Heivilin 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 shortstop and catcher's 29 home runs set a new state single-season record this spring, eclipsing the mark of 26 set in 2018. Heivilin also led the Wildcats to a 22-17 record and a berth in the Division 2 regional semifinals. She compiled a .600 batting average with 88 runs scored, 71 runs batted in, 35 walks, a .684 on-base percentage and a 2.186 OPS. Heivilin was named the Detroit Athletic Club Athlete of the Year and is a two-time First Team All-State selection.

A member of the National Honor Society, Heivilin has volunteered locally as part of multiple food drives to benefit a homeless shelter, and she has donated her time as a youth softball, basketball and volleyball coach. "Kali Heivilin is an exceptional athlete," said Three Rivers High head coach Kendra Kutz. "She works hard on and off the field and makes everyone around her better. She is a top-notch player who is always looking for ways to improve."

Heivilin has maintained a 4.13 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Alabama this fall.

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.

Heivilin joins recent Gatorade Michigan Softball Players of the Year Gabi Salo (2019-20, Escanaba High School), Lauren Esman (2018-19, Gull Lake High School), Jenny Bressler (2017-18, Plymouth High School), and Meghan Beaubien (2016-17, St. Mary Catholic Central High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Heivilin has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Heivilin 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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