

**SPANISH FORK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE UTAH 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 **Avery Sapp of Spanish Fork High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Utah Softball Player of the Year**. Sapp is the third Gatorade Utah Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Spanish Fork 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 Sapp as Utah'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, Sapp 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-10 sophomore right-handed pitcher, infielder and outfielder led the Dons to a 26-1 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Sapp compiled a 21-1 mark in the circle with a 1.25 earned run average. She allowed just 67 hits and 20 walks and amassed 190 strikeouts in 123.1 innings pitched. Sapp was the winning pitcher and hit a three-run home run in Spanish Fork's 13-2 win over Mountain Ridge in Game 2 of their championship series. At the plate, she posted a .506 batting average, with eight home runs, 31 runs scored, 34 runs batted in and a .891 slugging percentage.

Sapp has volunteered locally with Tabitha's Way Local Food Pantry and as a youth pitching coach. "Avery is a leader that inspires others with confidence and passion, day in and day out," said Natalie Jarvis, head coach of Spanish Fork High. "Every time Avery steps into the circle she emits grit that motivates the team behind her to play at that level."

Sapp has maintained a 3.71 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her junior year of high school 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.

Sapp joins recent Gatorade Utah Softball Players of the Year Makaiya Gomez (2019-20, Copper Hills High School), Huntyr Ava (2018-19, West High School), Jordyn Bate (2017-18, Spanish Fork High School), and Cambrie Hazel (2016-17, Spanish Fork High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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