

**ST. CHARLES NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ILLINOIS BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 29, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Nick DeMarco of St. Charles North High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Illinois Baseball Player of the Year**. DeMarco is the first Gatorade Illinois Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Charles North 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 DeMarco as Illinois best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in July, DeMarco joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo High School, Mich.), Jon Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Preparatory School, Wash.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman High School, Tenn.), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas), Rick Porcello (2006-2007, Seaton Hall Preparatory School, N.J.) and Kris Bryant (2009-10, Bonanza High School, Nev.).

The 5-foot-11, 185-pound senior infielder and right-handed pitcher posted a .423 batting average with 11 home runs, 55 runs scored and 37 RBI this past season, leading the North Stars to a 28-4 record and a berth in the Class 4A sectional finals. The state's No. 4 draft prospect as ranked by PrepBaseballReport and the 2021 Dukane Conference Player of the Year, DeMarco also compiled a 5-1 record on the mound with a 1.47 ERA and 60 strikeouts against just eight walks in 38 innings.

DeMarco has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics, Feed My Starving Children and a food pantry and has also donated his time as a youth baseball coach for children with special needs. "Nick DeMarco is a wonderful competitor and his baseball abilities speak for themselves," said John Scherrman, head coach at Wheaton Warrenville South High. "I've seen nothing but positives from him."

DeMarco has maintained a 4.64 GPA on a five-point scale in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Notre Dame 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.

DeMarco joins recent Gatorade Illinois Baseball Players of the Year Ed Howard (2019-20, Mount Carmel High School), Quinn Priester (2018-19, Cary-Grove High School), Matt McCormick (2017-18, St. Laurence High School), and Alek Thomas (2016-17, Mount Carmel High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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