

**REAGAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA 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 **Josh Hartle of Reagan High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade North Carolina Baseball Player of the Year**. Hartle is the first Gatorade North Carolina Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Reagan 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 Hartle as North Carolina's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Hartle 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 6-foot-5, 225-pound senior left-handed pitcher and first baseman had led the Raiders (14-2) to the Class 4A quarterfinals at the time of his selection. Hartle compiled an 8-0 record on the mound with a 0.60 ERA and 82 strikeouts against just five walks in 46.2 innings. The nation's No. 4 draft prospect as ranked by PrepBaseballReport, he also posted a .429 batting average with three home runs, 19 runs scored, 18 RBI and an OPS of 1.201 through 16 games.

Hartle has volunteered locally with an elementary school literacy-outreach program and helped raise nearly \$400 to benefit the OK Kids Korral in association with the Toby Keith Foundation. "Josh Hartle is not just one of the best competitors I've coached against, but also one of the best people off the field," said Bradley Rudisill, head coach at Davie County High. "He treats the game, opponents, officials and others around the game with class and respect."

Hartle has maintained a 3.38 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Wake Forest University this fall, but is projected as an early-round selection in July's Major League Baseball draft.

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.

Hartle joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Baseball Players of the Year Ryan Clifford (2019-20, Leesville Road High School), Blake Walston (2018-19, New Hanover High School), Owen White (2017-18, Jesse Carson High School), and MacKenzie Gore (2016-17, Whiteville High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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