

**LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MISSOURI BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 3, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Karson Milbrandt** of **Liberty High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Missouri Baseball Player of the Year**. Milbrandt is the first Gatorade Missouri Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Liberty 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 Milbrandt as Missouri's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Milbrandt 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 (2006-07, Seaton Hall Preparatory School, N.J.) and Kris Bryant (2009-10, Bonanza High School, Nev.).

The 6-foot-3, 200-pound senior right-handed pitcher compiled a 7-1 record on the mound this past season with a 1.66 ERA and 91 strikeouts in 50.2 innings, leading the Blue Jays (29-9) to the Class 6, District 8 title game. Milbrandt also batted .400 with an OPS of 1.043, driving in 15 runs, scoring 18 and swiping five bases. He is the state's No. 1 prospect in the Class of 2022 as rated by the Prep Baseball Report and a 2021 First Team All-State selection.

Milbrandt has volunteered locally in association with Harvesters, a community food network that provides food and related household products to more than 760 nonprofit agencies. He has also donated his time as both a youth baseball coach and a basketball coach and camp instructor. "Karson Milbrandt is an amazing individual," said Liberty High School head coach Kirk Bragg. "He is very humble and leads by example for his team and peers. As talented as he is, he brings a positive attitude every day and does an incredible job of blocking out the noise to continue to develop his game."

Milbrandt has maintained a 3.93 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Vanderbilt University 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Milbrandt joins recent Gatorade Missouri Baseball Players of the Year John Kramer (2020-21, Lafayette High School), Christian Little (2019-20, Christian Brothers College High School), Gage Singer (2018-19, Aurora High School), and Luke Mann (2017-18, St. John Vianney High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Milbrandt has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Milbrandt is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).

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