

**SOUTH ANCHORAGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ALASKA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 9, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Emily McCutcheon** of **South Anchorage High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Alaska Softball Player of the Year**. McCutcheon is the third Gatorade Alaska Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from South Anchorage 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 McCutcheon as Alaska'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, McCutcheon 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-4 junior shortstop led the Wolverines to a 26-3-1 record and the Division I state championship this past season. McCutcheon batted .658 with 59 runs scored and 58 runs batted in. She also hit 16 home runs, including one in South's 10-2 win over Chugiak High in the state title game. A two-time First Team All-Cook Inlet Conference selection, she also banged out 16 doubles while posting a .740 on-base percentage and a 1.539 slugging percentage.

McCutcheon has volunteered locally making handmade blankets for children in foster care and collecting toys for patients at The Children's Hospital at the Providence Alaska Medical Center. She has also donated her time as a youth softball coach. "Emily is a monster at shortstop and she is a killer at the plate," said Keith Anderson, head coach of Bettye Davis East Anchorage High. "She is the kind of athlete every team wants to have on their squad."

McCutcheon has maintained a 3.79 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school his 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.

McCutcheon joins recent Gatorade Alaska Softball Players of the Year Sabrina Jolin (2020-21, 2019-20. & 2018-19, South Anchorage High School), and Daisy Page (2017-18, East Anchorage 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, McCutcheon 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. McCutcheon 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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