

**MASUK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CONNECTICUT 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 **Kat Gallant** of **Masuk High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Connecticut Softball Player of the Year**. Gallant is the third Gatorade Connecticut Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Masuk 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 Gallant as Connecticut'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, Gallant 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.).

At the time of her selection, the 5-foot-10 senior right-handed pitcher had led the Panthers (24-1) to the Class L state tournament semifinals. Gallant owned an 18-1 record with a 0.72 ERA through 25 games, striking out 267 batters in 125.2 innings pitched, while walking just 31. She also batted .494 with five home runs and 34 RBI. The GameTimeCT Player of the Year in 2021, she was also a First Team All-State selection and MVP of last year's Class L state championship game.

Gallant has served as an elementary school teaching assistant and has volunteered locally on behalf of youth softball programs and a food pantry. "Kat Gallant is the most dominating pitcher that we faced," said Megan Lane, head coach at Brookfield High. "She has great movement on her pitches, she mixes speeds—up to the mid 60s—and she seems to be able to put the ball exactly where she wants to. Her ability to hit is equally as impressive."

Gallant has maintained a weighted 4.83 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Villanova 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.

Gallant joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Softball Players of the Year Sophie Garner-MacKinnon (2020-21, Hall High School), Abby Ota (2019-20, Joel Barlow High School), Maria Hanchuk (2018-19, South Windsor High School), and Becca Johnson (2017-18, Seymour 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, Gallant 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. Gallant 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.

###