

**MELBOURNE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE FLORIDA 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 **Jasmine Francik** of **Melbourne High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Florida Softball Player of the Year**. Francik is the first Gatorade Florida Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Melbourne 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 Francik as Florida'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, Francik 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-6 sophomore right-handed pitcher led the Bulldogs to a 26-2-1 record and the Class 6A state championship this past season. Francik posted a 19-1 mark with a 0.16 earned run average in the circle, striking out 251 batters while allowing just 32 hits and 19 walks in 129.2 innings pitched for a 0.39 WHIP. A member of Great Britain's Under-22 National Team, she fired 32 shutout innings in five postseason games to lead Melbourne to the title.

Francik is the social media manager of the UNICEF Club at Melbourne High. She has volunteered locally as a youth softball coach and at Nana's Children's Home, a community for foster children. "Jasmine is a once-in-a-generation player," said Dan Edel, head coach of Melbourne High School. "I realized [quickly] there was going to be something very special about [her]. She's the real deal. Her presence in the circle is like nothing I've ever seen."

Francik has maintained a weighted 4.43 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her junior year of high school 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.

Francik joins recent Gatorade Florida Softball Players of the Year Julia Knowler (2020-21, Fort Myers High School), Avery Goelz (2019-20, Lakewood Ranch High School), and Lexi Kilfoyl (2018-19 & 2017-18, Academy at the Lakes), 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, Francik 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. Francik 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.