

**NESHOBA CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MISSISSIPPI 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 **Tenly Grisham** of **Neshoba Central High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Mississippi Softball Player of the Year**. Grisham is the third Gatorade Mississippi Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Neshoba Central 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 Grisham as Mississippi'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, Grisham 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 senior third baseman and shortstop led the Rockets to a 31-3 record and a ninth-straight Class 5A state championship this past season. Grisham batted .531 with 55 runs scored along with 45 stolen bases. A six-year leadoff hitter for Neshoba Central, she also knocked in 23 runs, walked 15 times and struck out just once in 111 plate appearances. She is ranked as the nation's No. 42 recruit in the Class of 2022 by Extra Inning Softball.

Grisham has volunteered locally with the Youth Opportunity Summer Program sponsored by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, of which she is a member. She has also donated her time as a youth softball coach and mentor. "Tenly is a triple-threat on offense," said Casey Finch, head coach of New Hope High School. "She can slap for power, place the short ball and her speed and knowledge on the basepaths is incredible. She's also an exceptional defensive player."

Honored as a Mississippi Scholar, Grisham has maintained a 3.98 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Mississippi 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.

Grisham joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Softball Players of the Year Paige Kilgore (2020-21 & 2019-20, Houston High School), and Aspen Wesley (2018-19, 2017-18, 2016-17 & 2015-16, Neshoba Central 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, Grisham 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. Grisham 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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