

**KENTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WASHINGTON 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 **Sarah Wright** of **Kentwood High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Washington Softball Player of the Year**. Wright is the first Gatorade Washington Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Kentwood 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 Wright as Washington'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, Wright 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-8 sophomore right-handed pitcher compiled an 18-1 record with a 0.33 earned run average in the circle this past season, leading the Conquerors (21-2) to the Class 4A state quarterfinals. Wright fired eight no-hitters, including two perfect games. She struck out 330 batters while allowing just 26 hits and 26 walks in 128 innings pitched, earning North Puget Sound League Pitcher of the Year honors for the second straight season. At the plate, she batted .486 with 24 runs scored and 27 runs batted in. She hit six home runs and posted a .548 on-base percentage to go with an .837 slugging percentage.

A two-time NPSL wrestling champion, Wright donates her time as a member of the Kent School District Student Athletic Leadership Team. "Sarah was a huge part of their team," said Jason Stensby, head coach of Olympia High School. "Sarah can throw hard and can move the ball all over the zone. She can also keep batters off-balance with a very good change up. She is fearless in the circle."

Wright has maintained a 3.60 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.

Wright joins recent Gatorade Washington Softball Players of the Year Nicola Simpson (2020-21, Garfield High School), Raigan Barrett (2019-20, Rogers High School), Iyanla De Jesus (2018-19, Jackson High School), and Brooke Nelson (2017-18, Bonney Lake 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, Wright 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. Wright 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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