

**CEDARBURG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WISCONSIN 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 **Paytn Monticelli** of **Cedarburg High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Wisconsin Softball Player of the Year**. Monticelli is the first Gatorade Wisconsin Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Cedarburg 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 Monticelli as Wisconsin'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, Monticelli 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 6-foot-2 senior right-handed pitcher had led the Bulldogs (24-4) to the Division 1 quarterfinals. The state's returning Gatorade Softball Player of the Year, Monticelli owned a 17-2 record with a 0.33 ERA through 28 games and fanned 303 batters in 126 innings pitched, surrendering just 33 hits and 28 walks. She also batted .449 with five home runs and 22 RBI. The Division 1 Player of the Year as a junior, she was named USA TODAY's Milwaukee High School Sports Awards Softball Player of the Year and is ranked as the nation's No. 32 recruit in the Class of 2022 by Extra Inning Softball.

Monticelli has served as a peer math tutor and has volunteered locally on behalf of youth softball programs and with HeartSafe Wisconsin, which promotes the implementation of quality sudden cardiac arrest programs of awareness, training and effective emergency response at schools. "Paytn Monticelli is just overpowering as a pitcher," said John Spector, head coach at Whitefish Bay High School. "Her velocity is so much higher than anyone else in our conference and batters are overmatched. She's also a very good hitter."

Monticelli has maintained a 3.35 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Wisconsin 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.

Two-time winner Monticelli joins recent Gatorade Wisconsin Softball Players of the Year Maddie Gardner (2019-20, Sun Prairie High School), and Syd Supple (2018-19 & 2017-18, Oshkosh North 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, Monticelli 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. Monticelli 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.

###