

**SUMMERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 9, 2023) — In its 38<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ansley Bennett** of **Summerville High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade South Carolina Softball Player of the Year**. Bennett is the first Gatorade South Carolina Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Summerville 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 Bennett as South Carolina’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, Bennett joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Jordyn Bahl (2020-21, Papillion-La Vista High School, Neb.), Megan Faraimo (2017-18, Cathedral Catholic High School, Calif.), Rachel Garcia (2014-15, Highland High School, Calif.) and Cat Osterman (2000-01, Cypress Springs High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-6 sophomore right-handed pitcher and 5A Player of the Year led the Green Wave (32-1) to the 5A state championship this past season. Bennett compiled an 18-1 record in the pitcher’s circle with 226 strikeouts and a 0.19 ERA. She averaged 2.04 Ks per inning.

Bennett has volunteered locally packing care bags and organizing donations for Lowcountry Orphan Relief, which provides aid to area children identified as at risk or suffering from abandonment, abuse and/or neglect. She also has donated her time at Summerville Softball Kids Summer Camps, instructing youth softball players in the community. “I’ve been very impressed with her—she’s been their ace all year,” said Savannah Starling, Lugoff-Elgin High School head coach. “We saw her once in the preseason and again right before playoffs. I think she’s just getting better as she goes on.”

Bennett has maintained a 3.71 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.

Bennett joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Softball Players of the Year Sarah Gordon (2021-22, Lexington High School), Haylee Whitesides (2020-21, Byrnes High School), Kylee Gleason (2019-20, May River High School), and Bailey Betenbaugh (2018-19, Union County High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade’s Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade’s social impact partners, supporting Gatorade’s ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners’ grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [playeroftheyear.gatorade.com](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).