

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

**CHICAGO** (June 3, 2024) — In its 39<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **P.J. Morlando** of **Summerville High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade South Carolina Baseball Player of the Year**. Morlando is the second Gatorade South Carolina Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Summerville High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Morlando as South Carolina’s best high school baseball player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Gary Sheffield (1985-86, Hillsborough High School, Fla.), Alex Rodriguez (1992-93, Westminster Christian School, Fla.), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Max Clark (2022-23, 2021-22 & 2020-21, Franklin Community High School, Ind.).

The 6-foot-3, 210-pound senior center fielder batted .392 and reached base in more than 60 percent of plate appearances this past season, leading the Green Wave (23-1) to the Class AAAAA Lower State Championship game. Morlando racked up 44 walks and an OPS of 1.202 this spring. Ranked as the nation’s No. 1 prospect in the Class of 2024 by Perfect Game, he was the 2023 High School Home Run Derby champion, a member of the 2023 USA Baseball 18U National Team and a 2023 Perfect Game All-American Game selection.

Morlando has volunteered locally on behalf of the The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, the Lowcountry Food Bank, the Summerville Miracle League and as part of an after-school youth literacy program at elementary schools. “In my more than two decades of coaching high school baseball, P.J. Morlando is one of the most talented players against whom I have coached,” said Christopher Dague, head coach at West Ashley High School. “He embodies what it means to be a five-tool player. One of the things that is most impressive is the respect that he shows for his teammates and his opponents, as well as for the game. In victory and in defeat, Morlando has shown incredible maturity. I believe his future is without bounds and wherever he ends up, he will be an incredible asset to his program and organization.”

Morlando has maintained a 3.62 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of South Carolina this fall, but is projected as an early round selection in July’s Major League Baseball First Year Player Draft.

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.

Morlando joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Baseball Players of the Year Taylor Rabe (2022-23, Greenville High School), Tristan Smith (2021-22, Boiling Springs High School), Will Taylor (2020-21, Dutch Fork High School) and Caden Grice (2019-20, Riverside High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade’s commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$4.9 million in grants to winners across more than 1,900 organizations.

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 X(Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://x.com/Gatorade).