

**SUSSEX CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE DELAWARE SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 7, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Madge Layfield** of **Sussex Central High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Delaware Softball Player of the Year**. Layfield is the third Gatorade Delaware Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Sussex Central 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 Layfield as Delaware’s best high school softball 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 Amanda Freed (1997-98, Pacifica High School, Calif.), Cat Osterman (2000-01, Cypress Springs High School, Texas), Rachel Garcia (2014-15 & 2012-13, Highland High School, Calif.) and Ava Brown (2022-23 & 2021-22, Lake Creek High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-8 senior right-handed pitcher led the Golden Knights to a berth in the Delaware state championship game this past season. Layfield compiled an 18-4 record in the circle with a 1.08 ERA, surrendering just 66 hits while striking out 275 batters over 148.2 innings pitched to post a 0.821 WHIP. She also hit two home runs and recorded 17 RBI. The Delaware Coaches Association Player of the Year, she concluded her prep career with 1,045 strikeouts, nine no-hitters and a 73-13 record having reached the state title game three times.

Layfield has volunteered locally with the Special Olympics and by raising awareness toward ALS research via Strikeout ALS. She has also been a participant in Educators Rising, which offers opportunities to work with faculty on improving student leadership. “Madge, first and foremost, is a really great person and teammate—she’s a true power pitcher who uses all parts of the strike zone,” said Tom Pritchard, head coach at William Penn High School. “She’s confident in the circle and gets ahead in the count early. She has the ability to make batters chase to hit pitches outside the zone. To add to that, she can do some damage on the offensive side with her bat. Madge was, no doubt, the best pitcher we faced all year.”

Layfield has maintained a 3.9 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Central Arkansas 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.

Layfield joins recent Gatorade Delaware Softball Players of the Year Kaylan Yoder (2022-23, Delmarva Christian High School), Peyton Pusey (2021-22, Red Lion Christian Academy), Graceyn Frost (2020-21, Delaware Military Academy) and Tayler Vitola (2019-20, Appoquinimink 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.