CAMPBELL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE WYOMING 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 **Avery Gray** of **Campbell County High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Wyoming Softball Player of the Year**. Gray is the first Gatorade Wyoming Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Campbell County 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 Gray as Wyoming'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 state's 2022-23 Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-4 senior right-handed pitcher and infielder led the Camels to a 21-10 record and a third-place finish in the 4A state tournament this past season. Gray compiled a 16-3 record with a 2.44 ERA and 188 strikeouts in 106.1 innings pitched. She also batted .578 with 52 RBI while earning 4A All-State honors for the fourth time in her career.

Gray has volunteered locally with Blessings in a Backpack, through which she packs bags of food for children in need. She has also donated her time to bell-ringing for the Salvation Army in addition to offering pitching lessons to youth softball players. "Her contribution as a pitcher is far beyond other pitchers in the state," said Jodie Fitzwater, head coach at Wheatland High School. "Offensively, most pitchers do not succeed as much as she does at the plate. She definitely played a significant role in her team's success this year and will leave large shoes to fill."

Gray has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Montana State University-Billings this fall.

The <u>Gatorade Player of the Year</u> 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 Gray joins recent Gatorade Wyoming Softball Player of the Year Brogan Allen (2021-22, Cheyenne Central High School).

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 <u>playeroftheyear.gatorade.com</u> or follow us on social media on Facebook at <u>facebook.com/GatoradePOY</u>, Instagram at <u>instagram.com/Gatorade</u> and X(Twitter) at <u>x.com/Gatorade</u>.