

**WEST VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ALASKA BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 24, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Terrel Johnson of West Valley High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Alaska Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year**. Johnson is the first Gatorade Alaska Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from West Valley 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 track, distinguishes Johnson as Alaska's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Johnson joins an elite alumni association of state track & field award-winners, including Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt High School, Iowa), Allyson Felix (2002-03, Los Angeles Baptist High School, Calif.), Robert Griffin III (2006-07, Copperas Cove High School, Texas), Grant Fisher (2013-14 & 2014-15, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

The 5-foot-9, 165-pound senior won three individual events at the Division 1 state meet this past season, leading the Wolfpack to second place as a team. Johnson won the 300-meter intermediate hurdles in 40.28 seconds, soared 21 feet, 3.5 inches in the long jump and cleared 6-3 in the high jump. He also ran the second leg on the victorious 4x200 relay.

A talented artist and a football standout, Johnson has volunteered as a mentor for younger athletes. "Terrel is just a natural athlete, with tremendous agility, flexibility and speed," said West Valley assistant coach Shelli Swanson. "The sprint, jump and hurdle coaches always pushed and pulled over who got to have him for which of their events."

Johnson has maintained a 3.13 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at Colorado State University-Pueblo beginning 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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Johnson joins recent Gatorade Alaska Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Jacob Moos (2017-18, Galena High School), Brandon Nicholson (2016-17, Colony High School), Brett Morman (2015-16, South Anchorage High School), and Levi Thomet (2014-15 & 2013-14, Kodiak High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Johnson also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

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 www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.