

**BRIEN MCMAHON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CONNECTICUT 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 **Justin Forde of Brien McMahon High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Connecticut Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year**. Forde is the second Gatorade Connecticut Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Brien McMahon 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 Forde as Connecticut'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, Forde 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 6-foot-2, 190-pound senior won a triple jump national championship this past season, soaring 51 feet, 6.5 inches at the New Balance Nationals Outdoor. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Track and Field Athlete of the Year, Forde also won the triple jump at the State Open with a mark of 50-2 and leapt 23-5.75 to capture the long jump as well. He took second in the high jump. His season-best, wind-legal effort of 50-9 in the triple jump ranked as the nation's No. 2 performance among prep competitors in 2019 at the time of his selection.

A mentor for younger students, Forde has volunteered locally on behalf of youth basketball and track programs. "Justin Forde is, above everything, a competitor," said Brien McMahon High School coach Patrick Bradley. "He has natural ability, but he always works hard and strives to improve upon his talent. He's a student of the sport and prepares for every competition like a champion."

Forde has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track & field on scholarship at the University of Miami 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.

Two-time winner Forde joins Gatorade Connecticut Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Tyler Gleen (2016-17, Trumbull High School), Eric van der Els (2015-16, Brien McMahon High School), Spencer Brown (2014-15, Wilton High School) and Tyler Latham (2013-14, Fitch High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Forde 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.

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