

NEVADA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE IOWA 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 **Joven Nelson of Nevada High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Iowa Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year**. Nelson is the first Gatorade Iowa Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Nevada 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 Nelson as Iowa'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, Nelson 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, 155-pound senior won the 400-meter intermediate hurdles at the Class 3A state meet this past season, leading the Cubs to a 10th-place finish as a team. Nelson's winning time of 52.02 seconds ranked No. 6 in the nation among prep competitors in 2019 at the time of his selection. At the state meet, Nelson also ran in three relays for Nevada, helping the Cubs finish third in the 4x200, fourth in the 800-meter sprint medley and sixth in the 4x100.

A member of the Future Farmers of America, Nelson has volunteered locally as a youth track coach. "Joven is one of the best track athletes that I have ever coached against," said Brian Peterson, head coach of Roland-Story High School. "At the conference track meet this year I watched him win every event that he was in."

Nelson has maintained a 3.23 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at Iowa State University 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.

Nelson joins recent Gatorade Iowa Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Nick Phelps (2017-18, Kingsley-Pierson/Woodbury Central High School), Tristan Wirfs (2016-17, Mount Vernon High School), Ryan Schweizer (2015-16, Dowling Catholic High School), Thomas Pollard (2014-15, Gilbert High School) and Josh Evans (2013-14, Linn-Mar High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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