

UNION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE OKLAHOMA 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 **J.T. McCloud of Union High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year**. McCloud is the first Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Union 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 McCloud as Oklahoma'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, McCloud 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, 185-pound senior broke the tape in the 100-meter dash with a time of 10.59 seconds and the 200 dash in 21.36 at the Class 6A state meet this past season. McCloud's season-best times of 10.47 in the former and 21.09 in the latter both ranked among the nation's top 25 prep performances in 2019 at the time of his selection.

A devoted member of his church youth group, McCloud has volunteered locally on behalf of an elementary school reading initiative. "J.T. McCloud is the most dominant sprinter in the state," said Union coach Steve Patterson. "He's very confident in his abilities, and he's a quiet leader who shows up every day and works hard."

McCloud has maintained a 3.81 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in football on scholarship at the University of Utah 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.

McCloud joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Patrick Larrison (2017-18, Moore High School), Vernon Turner (2016-17 2015-16, Yukon High School), Ben Barrett (2014-15, Norman North High School) and Kevin Roddy (2013-14, Duncan High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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