

**INCARNATE WORD ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MISSOURI GIRLS TRACK AND FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 25, 2026) — In its 41<sup>st</sup> year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Bailey Hensgens of Incarnate Word Academy is the 2025-26 Gatorade Missouri Girls Track and Field Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Hensgens as Missouri’s best high school girls track and field athlete and she joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Sanya Richards (2001-02, St. Thomas Aquinas High School, Florida), Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone (2015-16 & 2016-17, Union Catholic Regional High School, New Jersey) and Jane Hedengren (2024-25, Timpview High School, Utah).

The 5-foot-11 junior jumper set a state record in the high jump this past season, and her leap of 6 feet, 1.25 inches at the Hillsboro Invitational ranked No. 1 nationally among prep girls competitors this spring. Hensgens won the high jump, long jump and triple jump at the Class 4 state meet, adding a second-place finish in the 200-meter dash to the Red Knights to the silver medal as a team. Hensgens launched herself 40-3.25 in the triple jump at the meet, which ranked No. 39 nationally, while her long jump of 19-6 ranked No. 59. She capped her spring by winning gold in the high jump at both the USATF Under-20 Championships and Nike Outdoor Nationals.

Hensgens has volunteered locally at St. Ann Catholic School as a student mentor and peer tutor. She has also donated her time as a youth track and volleyball coach. “What can you say about a girl who can high jump 6-2, triple jump 40 feet and long jump 20 feet while turning in stellar times in the 100, 200 and 400?” said Stephany Dueker, head coach of Windsor High School. “Bailey is fabulous.”

Hensgens has maintained a 3.49 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. 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 winners in each sport.

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 \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 organizations.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [playeroftheyear.gatorade.com](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X (Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://x.com/Gatorade).

###