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**FAIRLESS HIGH SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE OHIO GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 19, 2014) — In its 29th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Allyson Simmons of Fairless High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Simmons is the first Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Fairless 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 Simmons as Ohio's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Simmons joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Allyson Felix (2001-02, Los Angeles Baptist, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The 5-foot-7 senior cleared a state-record 13 feet, 4.25 inches in the pole vault to win her second straight Division 2 state championship this spring. Simmons is also a two-time indoor state champion in the pole vault and her winning effort this spring ranked as the nation's No. 6 performance among prep competitors in 2014 at the time of her selection.

Simmons has maintained a 3.43 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of a nursing home, the Salvation Army, youth sports camps and the Stark County Humane Society.

"Ally gives a tremendous amount of effort, day in and day out," said Fairless head coach Ben Russell. "She's an excellent competitor, and whether it's on the track, at the pole vault pit or in the weight room, she trains as if she's second-best, knowing that she must push herself harder every day."

Simmons has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at Ohio State University 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. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Simmons joins recent Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Katelyn Daniels (2012-13, Olentangy Orange High School), Alyssa McBride (2011-12, Bryan High School), Kaila Barber (2010 - 11 & 2009-10, Midpark High School), Stephanie Morgan (2008-09 & 2007-08 Barnesville), and Emily Pendleton (2006-2007, Woodmore) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit www.gatorade.com/poy.

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