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**LOWER RICHLAND HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 20, 2014) — In its 29<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Jaylen Bacon of Lower Richland High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade South Carolina Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Bacon is the first Gatorade South Carolina Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Lower Richland 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 Bacon as South Carolina'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, Bacon joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ryan Hall (1999-01, Big Bear HS, Calif.), Meb Keflezighi (1993-94, San Diego HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.) and Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.).

The 6-foot, 165-pound senior won three individual state championships at the Class AAA state meet this spring and led the Diamond Hornets to a third-place finish as a team. Bacon won the 100-meter dash in 10.51 seconds, the 200 in 21.59 and the 400 in 48.00. He also ran the second leg on Lower Richland's winning 4x100-meter relay quartet. Bacon, who placed fourth at the New Balance Nationals Outdoor championships in the 100, owns a season-best instrument-certified clocking of 10.53 in the 100, which ranked as the nation's No. 27 performance among prep competitors in 2014 at the time of his selection.

Bacon has maintained a 3.34 GPA in the classroom. A member of his school's Future Business Leaders of America educational association, he has volunteered locally at an eldercare facility and as a youth track coach.

"We are in the same classification as Jaylen so we saw first-hand how good he is," said David Pratt, head coach of Hanrahan High. "He improved a lot since last year. From the first meet of this year, he has been very consistent with his times."

Bacon has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on an athletic scholarship at Arkansas 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.

Bacon joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Griffie Loy (2012-13, Bishop England High School), Brandon Sanders (2011-12, 2009-10 & 2008-09, Dreher High School), Chris Brown (2010 - 11, Hanahan High School), Marcus Rowland (2007-08, Dorman), and Chad Phillips (2006-2007, Greenwood) 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).