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**DESERT VISTA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE ARIZONA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 17, 2015) — In its 30th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Dani Jones of Desert Vista High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Arizona Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Jones is the first Gatorade Arizona Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Desert Vista 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 Jones as Arizona'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, Jones 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-5 senior won three individual state championships at the Division I state meet this past season, leading the Thunder to third place as a team. The state's two-time reigning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Jones swept the 800-meter run with a time of 2:09.15, the 1,600-meter run in 4:55.02 and the 3,200-meter run in 10:19.62. Also the girls' track athlete of the year as named by The Arizona Republic, Jones anchored the winning 4x800-meter relay squad that broke the tape in 9:01.51. She concluded her high school career with state records in the mile (4:39.88), 1,600 meters (4:44.46) and 3,200 meters (10:09.58), ranking among the nation's top 12 prep competitors at each distance in 2015.

Jones has maintained a 3.92 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered on behalf of the Special Olympics, Best Buddies International, Girls on the Run and the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life.

"Dani is a phenomenal athlete who has worked hard to reach the marks she has accomplished," said Mark Sullivan, head coach of rival Gilbert High. "She displays good sportsmanship and is of high character. She treats other athletes with respect and encourages those who aren't at her same level of athletic performance."

Jones has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Colorado 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.

Jones joins recent Gatorade Arizona Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Ky Westbrook (2013-14 & 2012-13, Chandler High School), Jaide Stepter (2011-12, Canyon del Oro High School), Hannah Carson (2010-11, Chandler High School), Jasmine Todd (2009-10, Chandler), Jessica Tonn (2008-09, Xavier College Prep.), Hannah Carson (2007-08, Dobson), and Natalie Johnson (2006-07, Xavier College Prep) 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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