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**MIDDLETOWN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE DELAWARE 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 Ashley Bailey of Middletown High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Delaware Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Bailey is the first Gatorade Delaware Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Middletown 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 Bailey as Delaware'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, Bailey 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-1 senior won the pole vault with a state-record clearance of 12 feet, 3 inches at the Meet of Champions this past season. Named the William A. Thomson Award winner—bestowed to the state's most valuable track athlete by the New Castle County Coaches Cross Country and Track Association—Bailey placed third in the long jump, soaring 16-5.5, and took fifth in the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 15.68 seconds. A four-time First Team All-State honoree, she also ran the opening leg for the winning 4x200-meter relay quartet that broke the tape in 1:43.43.

Bailey has maintained a B average in the classroom. Also a member of her school's chorus, she has volunteered as a youth track, tumbling and gymnastics instructor.

"In my 17 years of coaching, I have never had the pleasure of watching the athleticism of one athlete such as Bailey," said Carmella Anderson, head coach of rival Delcastle Tech. "She may be small in stature, but her confidence and her determination to be successful spoke volumes. In the four years I have watched Bailey compete, she has become a dominant presence on the track and field circuit."

Bailey has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at the University of Delaware 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.

Bailey joins recent Gatorade Delaware Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Maiya Dendy (2013-14 & 2012-13, Padua Academy), Haley Pierce (2011-12 & 2010-11, The Tatnall School), Celina Emerson (2009-10, Delcastle Technical), Juliet Bottorff (2008-09, The Tatnall School), Brieanna Kennedy (2007-08, Caravel Academy), and Nikko Brady (2006-07, Charter School of Wilmington) 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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