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**ANCHORAGE CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE ALASKA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 23, 2016) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Tanner Ealum of Anchorage Christian High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Alaska Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Ealum is the first Gatorade Alaska Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Anchorage Christian 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 Ealum as Alaska'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, Ealum 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 senior sprinter won three individual championships at the Class 1A-2A-3A state meet this past season, leading the Lions to the state title as a team. Ealum took first in the 100-meter dash with a time of 12.22 seconds, captured the 200-meter dash in 24.76 and broke the tape in the 400-meter dash in 55.56. She also anchored the winning 4x400-meter relay squad (4:12.44). Her winning times of 24.73 in the 200 and 54.86 in the 400 at the 2015 Class 1A-2A-3A state meet as a junior both set state records.

Ealum has maintained a 4.00 GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating her time as a youth running instructor and as part of community road races, she has volunteered locally on behalf of her church, the Special Olympics and Anchorage's Downtown Soup Kitchen. Ealum has also completed a service-mission trip to Missouri's Camp Barnabas for children with special needs and chronic illnesses.

"Not only is she an outstanding athlete, she is kind and gracious toward her teammates and her competitors," said Tara Edwards, head coach at rival Grace Christian. "She works incredibly hard during the offseason, even to the point of not playing basketball her senior year so she could be ready for the track season. She has been respectful and sweet in every interaction I have had with her, as our teams have shared a practice facility and have been at many of the same events. Tanner is exemplary in her character, her interaction with peers and adults, and is a top-notch athlete."

Ealum has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va., 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.

Ealum joins recent Gatorade Alaska Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Allie Ostrander (2014-15 & 2013-14, Kenai Central High School), Audrey Michaelson (2012-13, Colony High School), Morgan Dampier (2011-12 & 2010-11, Wasilla High School), Lierin Flanagan (2009-10, Kenai Central High School), Gabrielle Todd (2008-09, Bartlett High School), Leah Francis (2007-08, Juneau-Douglas High School), and Andrea Crook (2006-07, Bartlett High School) 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).

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