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**PARKVIEW ARTS/SCIENCE MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE ARKANSAS GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 23, 2016) — In its 31st year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Jada Baylark of Parkview Arts/Science Magnet High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Arkansas Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Baylark is the first Gatorade Arkansas Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Parkview Arts/Science Magnet 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 Baylark as Arkansas'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, Baylark 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-6, senior sprinter, hurdler and jumper won three individual titles at the Arkansas Meet of Champions state meet this spring. Baylark captured the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.73 seconds, the 100-meter hurdles in 14.22 and the triple jump with a leap of 39 feet, nine inches. The 2016 Arkansas Democrat-Gazette Track & Field Prep Athlete of the Year, she also won the Arkansas State Heptathlon with 4,517 points and earned five individual titles at the Class 6A state meet, winning the 100 (11.86), the 200 (25.31), the 100 hurdles (14.34), the long jump (18-11.25) and the triple jump (39-0).

Baylark has maintained a 3.57 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Beta Club and the National Honor Society, she is a devoted parishioner at the Greater Archview Baptist Church and has volunteered locally on behalf of a homeless shelter.

"Jada Baylark is an exceptional athlete," said Keith Dale, head coach at Bryant High. "She has a great future ahead of her. She is a first-class person who is very friendly, respectful and supportive of all the athletes."

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

Baylark joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Lexi Weeks (2014-15, Cabot High School), Payton Stumbaugh (2013-14, 2012-13 & 2011-12, Har-Ber High School), Maggie Montoya (2010-11, Rogers High School), Grace Heymsfield (2009-10 & 2008-09, Elkins High School), Stephanie Foreman (2007-08, Lake Hamilton High School), and Natasha Shockey (2006-07, Russellville 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.